TIMOTHY PAWL

In Defense of Extended Conciliar Christology

A Philosophical Essay

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To my parents, Timothy Pawl Sr and Patricia Pawl, who provided an excellent model of familial life and love. Except when playing Rummy, when they thought it was better to teach that it's a cutthroat world and you can't rely on anyone.

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Tim Pawl
The Feast of St Cyril of Alexandria

Table of Contents

Introduction

In a previous book, *In Defense of Conciliar Christology: A Philosophical Essay*, I presented the Christological teachings of the first seven ecumenical councils, which I termed *Conciliar Christology*. I then considered philosophical arguments for the inconsistency or incoherence of that Christology. My conclusion of that book was that all such arguments of which I was aware fail. That's still true.

In this book, I consider extensions of Conciliar Christology, by which I mean conjunctions that include Conciliar Christology as a conjunct. For instance, suppose that the teachings of the first seven ecumenical councils on the person of Christ are all true, and then add to them the claim that multiple incarnations are possible. Does such an Extended Conciliar Christology entail a contradiction? My conclusion of this book is similarly negative: I know of no philosophical argument that shows the incoherence or inconsistency of the Extended Conciliar Christology I discuss in this book.

Were the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and some common claim or claims from the Christian tradition to entail a contradiction, that would be problematic for many proponents of Conciliar Christology. For many of these additional claims have good evidential support from within a Christian world-view, and thus, given the truth of those claims, and the inconsistency of those claims with Conciliar Christology, Conciliar Christology would be false. Also, many people who are inclined to accept the whole of Conciliar Christology are also inclined to accept other common claims in the Christian tradition. And so were there to be a contradiction in the common Christian teaching, that would be a problem for such thinkers.

These larger conjunctions include robust, traditional, Christological claims. Many of these claims share a broad consensus in the history of Christian reflection on the God-man. But none, so far as I am aware, are explicitly affirmed in the first seven ecumenical councils, from First Nicaea in 325 to Second Nicaea in 787. Some, for instance, the claim that Christ is impeccable (discussed in Chapter 6), have strong conciliar cases to be made for them.[1]

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[1] I give such a case in Chapter 6, Section II.

Others have explicit support from non-ecumenical councils from the same era. For instance, the claim that Christ was free in both his divine and human natures, which I take up in different ways in Chapters 5 and 8 of this book, is taught at an important Lateran Council in 649. In what follows I will enumerate the extensions I will consider in this book. Then I will make a few points about the method I will employ in discussing them.

I. THE EXTENSIONS AND SOME INITIAL JUSTIFICATION FOR CHOOSING THEM

I consider the following five extensions of Conciliar Christology in this book:

1. The conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the claim that multiple incarnations are possible (Chapters 2–3).

2. The conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the claim that Christ descended into hell during his three days of death (Chapter 4).

3. The conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the claim that Christ's human will was free in the incarnation (Chapter 5).

4. The conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the claim that Christ was impeccable (Chapter 6).

5. The conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the claim that Christ, via his human intellect, knew all things past, present, and future (Chapters 7–8).

Call the Christology that results from conjoining Conciliar Christology with all five extensions of the additional propositions mentioned in 1–5 above *Fully Extended Conciliar Christology*.

I choose these extensions for various reasons. As already noted above, some of the extensions are strongly motivated by things defined at early councils. Some are affirmed in creedal statements from non-conciliar sources. For instance, the descent into hell is affirmed in the Apostles' Creed.[2] Many are present in writings of early, important theologians. One can find affirmations of many of them in important works of doctrine from different Christian ecclesial bodies. Indeed, I make it my practice in this book to follow the dogmatic lead of two well-respected dogmatic series, in the hopes of making it evident both that these extensions are not foreign to the mind of traditional Christianity and that I am not veering from the mind of the church in discussing

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[2] For the choice of the word "hell" here, rather than "underworld" or "Hades," see Chapter 1, Section I.

them: the *Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos* (de Aldama and Solano 2014) and Monsignor Joseph Pohle's twelve-volume dogmatic series (Pohle 1913). All these extensions have a strong representation in the tradition, which I make it a point to explicate in the forthcoming chapters.

In addition, each of these claims, as I will later show in the relevant chapters, was affirmed by St Thomas Aquinas. I do not treat the thought of Aquinas as an additional authoritative source of theology in this book, on par with the councils and scripture. However, the facts that his work is vitally important for many theologians, that the Catholic Church has given strong words of praise to his work and his conclusions, and that his written corpus is viewed as the high point of scholastic, metaphysically loaded theology, all provide reason to focus on this great saint's work. Were there a contradiction in the Fully Extended Conciliar Christology, then the Christology of St Thomas Aquinas would be inconsistent. Since Thomism is a major school of theology (both historically and presently), such a contradiction would be an important conclusion to discover. Likewise, were there no contradiction presently derivable by philosophical argument in this extended Christology, that, too, would be important to show.

II. SOME POINTS ON METHOD

Concerning method, much of what I do in this book has the following form. I begin each discussion by noting the claim I intend to add to Conciliar Christology as an extension. I provide some evidence from tradition to motivate the conclusion that this claim is widely shared, or implicit in the councils, or affirmed in other, non-ecumenical creeds or councils. I then note the objections raised in the literature about such a claim, or about such a claim when conjoined with Conciliar Christology. After that, I formalize the objections logically to the best of my ability. The remainder of the discussion is then spent providing and assessing responses to the objections against that particular extension of Conciliar Christology.

Some extensions of Conciliar Christology require a careful explication of what, exactly, the extension is. Such discussions take some time and are needful in order to target the right extensions in the objections. For instance, Chapter 2 of this book focuses on differentiating four different senses of "multiple incarnations" in the phrase "multiple incarnations are possible." Likewise, Chapter 7 spends considerable space presenting the sort of knowledge in question in the claim that Christ, via his human intellect, knew all things past, present, and future.

II.a. Concerning the Assumption of Conciliar Christology

The reader will no doubt note that I did not mention justifying the truth of Conciliar Christology or some extension from scripture as part of my method. This is by design. In order to defend a conjunction from the charge of contradiction, one needn't show the conjuncts to be true. That requires too much of the defender. If you are minding your own business, going about your day believing things, and I stop you to let you know that I have an argument for the falsity of something you believe, you don't need to show that your belief is *true* in order to show that my argument for its falsity is spurious. And if I were to attempt to subtly shift the burden of proof, requiring you to give evidence for why your beliefs are true, you would be well within your rights to say something like the following:

> Look, I was just sitting here *believing* things. It was *you* who came over with the argument that I was believing wrongly. It isn't incumbent on *me* to show that what I believe is true at this juncture; I need merely to show that your reason for believing that my belief is false is answerable by a proponent of my view. I haven't given an argument for my view, and I needn't at this point in our conversation. By my count, the score is Me: 0; You: −1.[3]

In this work, I will assume the truth of Conciliar Christology as a background assumption in the evaluation of the extensions of Conciliar Christology. Such an assumption is dialectically appropriate, insofar as the objections I discuss are meant as difficulties for the proponent of Conciliar Christology. Such a proponent, when responding to a charge of inconsistency against his view, is allowed to make reference to his view. (Imagine saying to someone, "I think your account of the Peloponnesian War is inconsistent; in reply, you are not allowed to make reference to any historical views you might have.") Here the defended views are extensions of Conciliar Christology, and, clearly, Conciliar Christology is itself a resource open to a conjunction of Conciliar Christology and something else. In a similar manner, the opponent of that Christology is allowed to refer to the Christology in order to put dialectical pressure on its proponent to concede the premises of the argument (e.g., "even though *I* don't believe in any of this stuff, *you* do, Christian, and so you should grant that the premises that lead to the problem are true"). When arguing about whether or not a certain set of claims is inconsistent, both friend and foe are within their dialectical rights to draw upon the set of claims to support or rebut a charge of inconsistency.

In addition, I have already written a book and multiple articles defending Conciliar Christology from philosophical objections, so this assumption is not

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[3] The text of this little speech is composed of snippets of things I recall hearing Peter van Inwagen say in conversations.

made in ignorance of the philosophical objections it faces.[4] Rather than showing that Conciliar Christology or the extensions I discuss are *true*, I will limit myself to showing that they are part of the traditional Christology. In my estimation, that is all that is required to show the importance of their being considered.

II.b. On Mystery

Importantly, from my point of view, I don't think we can go further than defeating defeaters for the central mysteries of the faith. That is, I think that our approach should be one of answering objections to the central mysteries of the faith. I agree with the standard notion of "mystery" employed in Catholic theology, which is put well by de Aldama and Solano:

> *A mystery in the strict sense.* It is a truth that transcends not only human philosophy but also the angelic natural intelligence. Even if it is made known by divine revelation and has been accepted by an act of faith, still regarding its intrinsic possibility it remains impervious to the human intellect.
>
> (de Aldama and Solano 2014, 97)

I do not take us to be able *philosophically to prove* the truth or even possibility of the incarnation. Such is beyond our abilities. What to do, then, in the face of arguments against the Christian mysteries, arguments which attempt to show that the Christian mysteries are repugnant to reason? Here as well I find agreement with de Aldama and Solano, as they continue on the same page:

> this non-repugnance can be proved by us not positively, but only *negatively*, that is, by showing that the reasons of those opposing this dogma do not evidently prove their case.

This negative response to the charges of repugnance is precisely the task I am undertaking here. And it was the same task I undertook in my previous book as I make clear in the first paragraph of this Introduction. Moreover, this negative task is one that the various authors of the *Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos* take up in their countless sections of objections and replies. The main difference between what I am doing and what they do is a difference in method, not in goal. They employ a scholastic method built upon Aristotelian logic (e.g., "I concede the major and distinguish the minor"). I employ an analytic method built upon modern logic (no example is necessary here; examples abound in the remainder of this work). Only an ignorance of history

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[4] See, for instance, Pawl (2014a, 2014b, 2014c, 2015, 2016b, 2016c, 2016d, 2016e); Pawl and Spencer (2016); Pawl and Timpe (2016, 2017b).

would lead one to believe that the goals of Analytic Theology are new-fangled. The goals are found in the philosophically minded theologians of yesteryear, including the *Doctor communis*, St Thomas Aquinas.

II.c. On Privileging the Councils

I have seen objections to the sort of method I employ that go as follows:

> Look, maybe you are right that the tradition taught this or that. Perhaps the councils teach that Christ had two distinct wills. Or perhaps the theological tradition taught that both those wills were free (see Chapter 5 for a discussion of both these claims). Be that as it may, the Christian is not bound to such councils. The Christian is bound to scripture. And scripture (so says the objector here) does not teach that particular claim. So, the Christian is free to reject it, or the other suspicious aspects of Conciliar Christology, or of the theological tradition from which you draw your extensions.

By my lights, such a response misses the point. It may well be that Christians are not bound to the theological tradition. Surely some think that. It might be that, in the final analysis, it is only scripture, or only your personal interpretation of scripture, that should be binding on the conscience of the Christian. These are not things I discuss in this book. I'm not claiming that Christians ought to defer to the councils (though I in fact think that they should), and I'm not claiming that Christians shouldn't. What I'm doing, to be absolutely clear, is presenting conjunctions of Christological claims and assessing philosophical arguments against those conjunctions. Part of the motivational work I do in each chapter is arguing that the conjunctions are composed of conjuncts that should be viewed as important parts of the Christian tradition. The objection indented above that I'm discussing says, in effect, that while the conjuncts are part of the Christian tradition, they are not part of the *right* part of that tradition, and so are not binding. The respondent refuses to enter into the dialectic that I set out, which includes assuming the truth of the conjunctions, then seeing what philosophical objections they face.

If, instead, the respondent is claiming that I succeed in showing that there is no contradiction, but that such information is not important, since at least one of the conjuncts is something she thinks no Christian should affirm anyway, then a different response is required. The respondent now grants the conclusions of my arguments but denies their utility. It might very well be that the arguments are not useful for her, given her assumptions about what theological sources are binding. That said, hers are not the only assumptions, and whether something suits her needs is not a good standard for assessing what is valuable in general, or what is valuable for the Christian community.

II.d. Extensions Cumulatively Assumed

Another important note on method: as I move from one extension to the next, I will continue assuming the truth of the previous extensions. So, for instance, by the time I get to the knowledge that Christ had via his human intellect in Chapters 7 and 8, I will retain as background assumptions that multiple incarnations are possible, that Christ descended into hell during the three days of death, etc. Oftentimes I will not reiterate these assumptions in my discussions, but the reader should remember that they are being made. I do this because my goal is to show that what I described above as "Fully Extended Conciliar Christology" is not shown to be inconsistent by the extant philosophical arguments one might marshal against it. To do so, I need to consider the conjunction of all the extensions with Conciliar Christology. If I merely consider the extensions piecemeal, there will be no evidence that the whole conjunction avoids problems. Put otherwise, if I show that Conciliar Christology and an extension (CC&E1) survive objections, and separately that Conciliar Christology taken with a different extension (CC&E2) survive objections, I will not thus have shown that CC&E1&E2 survives objections. To show that Fully Extended Conciliar Christology survives objections, I must consider the whole conjunction. I do this explicitly in the Conclusion.

The reader who finds certain extensions unpalatable for whatever reason need not be upset by my discussion of these additional background assumptions. For one reason, if a conjunction is not rendered inconsistent by an argument, no conjunction of a subset of its conjuncts will be rendered inconsistent by that same argument. That is, if I show CC&E1&E2&E3 to be consistent, and the reader rejects E3, the reader can be confident that rejecting E3 will not render my view as a whole to be suddenly incapacitated by the discussed objections. By showing the larger conjunction to be safe from the objections, I show the reader's preferred, smaller, conjunction to be safe as well.[5]

A reader who denies a conjunct of Fully Extended Conciliar Christology has another avenue for answering some of the forthcoming arguments. She could simply deny the truth of the assumption in question, which may, in some cases, suffice to answer the argument. For example, she might herself reject E3, and so note that any argument that uses E3 as a premise will be unsound in her

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[5] Might it be, though, that the only means of saving the conjunction of CC&E1&E2 is by affirming E3? That is, might CC&E1&E2 be safe from contradiction *only if* E3 is true? Perhaps. But then that is a *new* argument for the inconsistency of CC&E1&E2. (The new argument would go as follows: If CC&E1&E2 is true, then E3 is true; E3, though, is false; thus, CC&E1&E2 is false.) My only claim here is that the arguments I have already considered and shown not to imply a contradiction in the Extensions of Conciliar Christology will not need to be reconsidered if one rejects one of the extensions discussed. Moreover, there is no objection to an extension that I discuss in this book that is rebutted *only if* some other extension is true.

estimation. Such a mere denial won't show that the work I'm doing is faulty, since even those who deny a certain proposition might still claim that an argument against it is unsound. A socialist may deny certain libertarian political theses, yet still concede that the libertarian has an adequate response *from his libertarian perspective* to a particular objection to those theses. Likewise, the person who denies the truth of an extension I discuss in this book might well say that, given the extension and Conciliar Christology, there is a good answer to a certain objection to that extension. She might say, "well, I deny E3; but I see that were someone to accept it, along with CC, E1, and E2, Pawl's reply would work." Saying this, though, would, for the person who denies the truth of an extension that I discuss, be essentially to concede that I've succeeded in showing what I set out to show: that the philosophical objection in question against the conjunction of Conciliar Christology with certain extensions to it is not successful.

II.e. The Division of Labor

As with my other work, I will focus on *philosophical* objections to the extensions of Conciliar Christology. No doubt there are other types of objections, for instance, exegetical, historical, etc. It is important that the proponents of the extensions of Conciliar Christology have something to say about such objections as well. But it is not required that *I* be the one to answer them. And that is a good thing, as my expertise is not sufficient for such work. As with any intellectual undertaking, there is a division of labor here as well. As Paul notes of another context (1 Cor. 3), some plant, others water. Perhaps I spray philosophical pesticide. Some set the foundation, others build upon it. Perhaps I stymie the sapping saboteurs. In any case, I am one in purpose with my fellow laborers.

   I have found this division of labor to be unsatisfactory to some thinkers representing differing methodological backgrounds. I'm reminded of the adage: to a hammer, everything looks like a nail. This general malady presents itself in different ways, given the preferred methodology of the judger. Infected logicians lament the lack of predicate calculus in works of theology, claiming "if we only got clear on the implication relations between the propositions involved in our utterances we'd solve this mess in no time; who cares what Cyril of Wherever thought?" Something similar might be true of those who look at the philosophical objections and respond: "if these people just took the time to read the Christological debates of the fourth–seventh centuries—in the original Greek, of course—they'd see that they are mistaken about everything." The truth of the matter is that history and philosophy are done best when they are influenced by each other. We should care about the writings of Cyril of Alexandria when considering the philosophical objections people raise against

the traditional doctrine of the incarnation, for the very good reason that his writings inform that traditional doctrine. The same is true for many other theological authorities. We should care about the implications inherent in the relations between theological propositions because truth can't contradict truth; thus, if a given set of theological propositions implies a contradiction, then that set must contain some falsehood.[6]

To see from a different angle the need for multiple methodologies, consider what would be missing if we tried to go our own way without the aid of our fellow laborers. Suppose someone questions whether the concept of "person" used at the early councils is the same as the concept used by the scholastics, or by ourselves in our contemporary worship services or debates about bioethics. The philosopher can spend hours carving up the logical space to discern 16 or 24 or 48 viable meanings of the term, and the various logical relations between them. All of that, however, is useless in answering the question; what is needed is some grounding in the history of how these terms were used by the key players at the councils. Similarly, suppose that someone questions whether something could be both God and man, providing a rudimentary argument of the following form: all divine things are eternal; no human is eternal; thus, no divine thing is human. Here the historian can spin a magnificent oration about the history of such questions, the differences in various approaches to the question across the centuries and continents, etc. All of that, however, is useless in answering the question in the absence of some logical application to the argument. Is it invalid due to a tacit equivocation? Is a premise false, and if so, which?

II.f. The Types of Philosophical Objections Considered

Care should be taken in the choice of the philosophical objections to be considered. For there are ways of objecting philosophically that I cannot discuss in this book. I think of them as nuclear objections: objections that not only target Christology, but lay waste to surrounding, non-theological claims as well. A few examples will show what I mean. One might object to Fully Extended Conciliar Christology on the following grounds. If it is true, it implies the existence of persons. But there are no persons. Thus, Fully Extended Conciliar Christology is false. Likewise, if global epistemic skepticism is true, no one could know anything. Hence, Christ couldn't know anything (at least in his human nature), given global skepticism. But he does know some things, according to Fully Extended Conciliar Christology. Thus, if global epistemic skepticism is true, Fully Extended Conciliar Christology is false.

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[6] Here, as throughout this book, I am assuming the truth of Classical logic. Jc Beall is currently doing excellent work on Christology that forgoes this assumption.

To my mind, such argumentation takes us too far afield from the theology. One needn't prove that there is such a thing as a person, or that some things are genuinely known, in order to answer objections to Fully Extended Conciliar Christology. By analogy, a book defending a moral view, say, utilitarianism, or a metaphysical view, say, incompatibilism concerning free will, does not first need to prove that there are persons who act morally or are free. That there are no people or that there is no knowledge might well be a conclusion of a careful philosophical argument. Nevertheless, such conclusions are too remote from the topic at hand to require refutation prior to beginning a moral or metaphysical (or psychological or sociological or historical or theological or anthropological or . . .) investigation.

II.g. My Reliance on Thomas Aquinas

A final point on method. The reader will see that in this book I employ the work and arguments of St Thomas Aquinas in every discussion of an extension. St Thomas is surely the author whose work on Christology has influenced me most. And he is the Christian theologian and philosopher whose work I know best. It is fair to say that my theological presuppositions are western, and less broadly, Thomistic. The reader may be tempted to think that I argue that some extension is *true* because St Thomas says that it is so. Such an inference, though, is one that I do not make in this book. Recall that part of my goal is to show that these extensions are common or well attested. One way to show this is to show that mainstream scholars affirmed them. So, my argumentation isn't to be taken as saying that whatever Aquinas thought is *ipso facto* true. Rather, the goal is first to show that Aquinas affirmed *X*, and very often, to give a detailed explication of *why* he affirmed *X*. I show that he affirmed it, not to *prove* the *truth* of the extension, but rather, to provide additional *justification* for my *inclusion* of the extension in my considerations. Aquinas's "say so" does not of itself demonstrate that something is true, but his affirmation does show that a prestigious figure, whose thought still flourishes today, thought it to be true. All of which, combined with the conciliar and confessional sources that I cite, provides good reason to take under consideration the extensions that I have chosen to discuss.

Another reason to focus on the work of Aquinas stems from the metaphysics of his Christological views. Aquinas's incarnational theology is robustly metaphysical; it is substantial in more than once sense. Showing that a Thomistic view of the Incarnation can survive philosophical objections suggests that other, less robust views can survive, too.

In the previous paragraph, I referred to the view of the incarnation that I am presenting as "Thomistic." I do so with trepidation. For, as I hope is clear,

expounding and defending St Thomas's Christology is not my overarching aim in this book. (For recent books that do that, I heartily recommend monographs by Michael Gorman (2017) and Fr Thomas Joseph White (2016).) My goal is to show that the extant philosophical arguments against Extended Conciliar Christology fail. The work of St Thomas certainly contributes to that goal. I am inspired by his work and I draw deeply from it. That said, articulating and defending Thomism is not my primary goal here. I might get Aquinas wrong at every turn. For every claim anyone has ever made concerning how to interpret Thomas, there is often some Thomist who adamantly claims that the assertion in question is the most boneheaded, ignorant reading of Aquinas that one could ever devise. Even so, such would not imply that I failed to show what I intend to show.

III. THE PLAN OF THE BOOK

The plan of this book is as follows. Chapter 1 presents what I think of as the preliminaries. It summarizes the content of Conciliar Christology, it provides the definitions I employ for the key terms used by those councils, and it provides a skeletal metaphysics for going forward.[7] The following seven chapters are broken down into three sections: extensions concerning natures; extensions concerning wills; extensions concerning intellects.

Chapter 2, the first chapter dealing with the extensions concerning natures, distinguishes four senses of "multiple incarnations" and gives some reasons why Aquinas held such a strong view of multiple incarnations. (According to Aquinas, each divine person could become incarnate in multiple human natures simultaneously, and the three persons could share individual assumed natures.) Then in the following chapter, Chapter 3, I discuss multiple objections to the possibility of multiple incarnations. The final chapter of Part I, Chapter 4, discusses the state of Christ's human nature during his death and descent into hell.

Part II of the book, the section on extensions concerning the two wills of Christ, begins with Chapter 5, which discusses the relations between Christ's divine will and his assumed, human will. It argues that both wills can be free, or that Christ can be free with respect to both wills, even in the face of difficulties from the conciliar texts and philosophy. Chapter 6, the second and final chapter of Part II, discusses whether Christ could be impeccable. It argues that Christ could be fully human, could be tempted, and yet still remain impeccable. Moreover, it discusses different ways of understanding the terms

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[7] All of this work is done in much greater detail in Pawl (2016e, chaps 1–3).

"impeccable" and "tempted" such that, given one sense of the terms, Christ could be both peccable and impeccable.

Part III considers extensions concerning the knowledge of Christ's human intellect, or, put otherwise, the knowledge that Christ had in virtue of his human intellect. Were Christ to have known, via his human intellect, all things past, present, and future, would such knowledge exacerbate the traditional problem of foreknowledge and freedom? For, were Christ, in his human intellect, to know the future, some responses to that problem—for instance, open theism, or the eternity solution—would not be viable general solutions to the foreknowledge and freedom problem. Chapter 7 takes up this question. Finally, supposing Christ has such impressive knowledge via his human intellect: what ramifications would that have on *his* freedom? This question has clear connections with the content of Part II; in particular, it assumes that Christ was free via his human will, which was the topic of Chapter 5. But since it requires an additional thesis about Christ's assumed intellect, I discuss it in Part III. I order the Parts as I do because the content of Part II is required for an adequate understanding of this issue, the issue that Chapter 8 takes up.

I conclude that none of the arguments I consider shows the inconsistency or incoherence of Fully Extended Conciliar Christology. If there are philosophical arguments that show the conjunction of Conciliar Christology with the five extensions I discuss in this book to be false, they remain to be seen.

1

Preliminaries

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter sets out the reasoning for focusing on the first seven ecumenical councils. It explains why they are special and what their teachings are concerning Christ; it offers some understandings of the terms employed by the councils, and some rudimentary metaphysics for understanding the conciliar claims. Each of these three topics—the teaching of the councils, the terms and concepts employed, and some rudimentary metaphysics for understanding them—was the topic of a separate chapter in my *In Defense of Conciliar Christology: A Philosophical Essay*. I do not intend to rehash those discussions here. Rather, I will provide, in summary form, my conclusions about these topics from that work. I encourage the readers who want to see the justification for these conclusions worked out at much greater detail to refer to that book.

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ECUMENICAL COUNCILS

The first seven ecumenical councils—the First Council of Nicaea, 325; the First Council of Constantinople, 381; the Council of Ephesus, 431; the Council of Chalcedon, 451; the Second Council of Constantinople, 553; the Third Council of Constantinople, 680–1; and the Second Council of Nicaea, 787—are taken by many Christian groups to be the bedrock of Christian orthodoxy.[1] Catholics believe the councils never to have erred in matters of faith and morals. For instance, the 23rd error listed in the *Syllabus of Errors*

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[1] For good sources on the theology and history of these early ecumenical councils, see Bellitto (2002); Boyle (1995); L. D. Davis (1990); Grillmeier (1965); Jedin (1960); J. F. Kelly (2009); Kereszty (2002); Lamont (2008); Landon (1909a, 1909b); Leith (1982); Need (2008); O'Collins (1995, 2002b); Price and Whitby (2007, 2011); Price (2009, 2012); Russell (2000, 35–9); Stevenson and Kidd (1973); Tanner (2001); Wilhelm (1908).

promulgated by Pope Pius IX (Denzinger 2002, para. 1723) is that "The Roman Pontiffs and the Ecumenical Councils have trespassed the limits of their powers, have usurped the rights of princes, and have even erred in defining matters of faith and morals."[2] Likewise, the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church from the Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, in paragraph 25, writes of the infallibility of the bishops when gathered in an ecumenical council.

Orthodox Christians, too, see the seven ecumenical councils as authoritative and binding. For instance, Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev (2012, 43) writes of the authority of Tradition in Orthodox Theology the following:

> This absolute and indisputable authority is used in the dogmatic decisions of the ecumenical councils, proceeding from what the Church has received....These decisions are not subject to change and are universally applied to all members of the Church.

He then goes on to refer, in particular, to the "decisions and canons of the seven ecumenical councils." Likewise, Kallistos Ware (1964, 28) writes, in a chapter entitled "The Church of the Seven Councils," "the Councils defined once and for all the Church's teaching upon the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith—the Trinity and the Incarnation." Roman Catholics and the Orthodox agree, then, that the Christological teachings of those seven councils are unrevisable and binding.

Various other groups of Christians view the councils, or some subset of them, as authoritative or binding, in some sense or other of those words. John Calvin, for instance, wrote in his *Institutes*:

> Those ancient Councils of Nice, Constantinople, the first of Ephesus, Chalcedon, and the like, which were held for refuting errors, we willingly embrace, and reverence as sacred, in so far as relates to doctrines of faith, for they contain nothing but the pure and genuine interpretation of Scripture, which the holy Fathers with spiritual prudence adopted to crush the enemies of religion who had then arisen.   (Calvin 1845, bk 4, chap. 9, sect. 8.)

This text does not affirm that the councils were specially protected by the Holy Spirit to ensure that they do not teach error, as Catholics think. Nevertheless, it does affirm that the teachings of the ecumenical councils (the first four "and the like") concerning the doctrines of faith, teach nothing but the pure and genuine

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[2] It is true here that the error listed has three parts, and so one might read it to say that the conjunction of those three parts is in error. In such a case, then, the statement will be true even if only one part is false. So, there is a reading of the passage on which one could say that the error is believing that the rights of princes have been usurped, but that the other two claims about the authority of the church are, indeed, correct. Such a reading would save the letter, in a nuanced logical sense, but deny the plain intended meaning, which is that to make any of those three claims is to embrace an error.

interpretation of scripture. In other words, the councils get Christology right, according to Calvin's *Institutes*.

Anglicans have put forward different statements concerning the authority of these councils. The Jerusalem Declaration, for instance, says in its third paragraph:

> We uphold the four Ecumenical Councils and the three historic Creeds as expressing the rule of faith of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church.[3]

Those creeds include the Apostles' Creed, which affirms that Christ descended into hell. So, we see here not only an affirmation of the content of the first four ecumenical councils, but also of some of the extensions I go on to discuss. The Anglican Church in North America writes:

> Concerning the seven Councils of the undivided Church, we affirm the teaching of the first four Councils and the Christological clarifications of the fifth, sixth and seventh Councils, in so far as they are agreeable to the Holy Scriptures.[4]

Here the Anglicans, or this group of Anglicans, affirms the content of Conciliar Christology to be in agreement with scripture. Finally, Henry Percival, an episcopal divine, in the conclusion of his preface to *The Seven Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church*, writes:

> In conclusion I would add that nothing I have written must be interpreted as meaning that the editor personally has any doubt of the truth of the doctrines set forth by the Ecumenical Councils of the Christian Church, and I wish to declare in the most distinct manner that I accept all the doctrinal decrees of the Seven Ecumenical Synods as infallible and irreformable.   (Percival 1900, ix)

A brief sampling of other influential theologians who write of accepting some of the teachings of the early councils include Louis Berkhof (1965, 316), Oliver Crisp (2007a, 161–3, 2009, chap. 1), Richard Holland (2012, 77), Herbert Relton (1917, XXIX), and Stephen Wellum (2016, 257, 308, 311).[5]

It seems to me, and this is only a seeming, that very many confessional Protestant theologians would find it unsettling to say the least, if their theology were construed to deny anything taught definitively at the first four ecumenical

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[3] The full document is available here: <http://fca.net/resources/the-jerusalem-declaration>.

[4] The full document is available here: <http://www.anglicanchurch.net/index.php/main/Theology/>. It is true that one might read the "in so far as" clause here in different ways. It could mean that they affirm what I call Conciliar Christology because it is taught by scripture. But it could also mean that they affirm Conciliar Christology only in those points where it agrees with scripture. I take their meaning to be the first, after discussion with a priest from that communion, but I am open to correction. I thank James Arcadi for these two Anglican quotations.

[5] For some discussion of which ecclesial bodies accept which councils, what authority they claim the councils to have, and why they claim them to have that level of authority, see Bellitto (2002), Kelly (2009, 64), Lamont (2008), Tanner (2001, 3–4, 7, 13), Washburn (2010), and Wessling (2013).

councils. Likewise, with respect to the latter three councils, the teachings on Christology are also given deference.[6] It is true that some Protestant groups had negative things to say about the seventh council. But these negative assessments focused upon that council's teaching on the veneration of icons, and not upon its teaching on the incarnation (about which this council primarily reasserted the previous conciliar teachings).

III. THE TEACHING OF THE ECUMENICAL COUNCILS

As I have stipulated in defining the term, Conciliar Christology embraces all of the teachings about Christ found in the accepted texts of the first seven ecumenical councils. Such texts range from the definitions of faith, anathemas, creeds, and canons to letters accepted by the conciliar participants as conveying dogmatic exposition. Thus, Leo's Tome to Flavian was accepted at Chalcedon as part of the conciliar pronouncement. As such, anything included in that Tome concerning Christology is a part of Conciliar Christology.[7]

In those councils, we find the following teachings:[8]

 (i) There was (and is) one person, Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, who, after the incarnation, has two complete and distinct natures (see Tanner (1990, 5, 86)).

 (ii) One of these natures is the one and only divine nature, according to which the person of Christ is rightly considered immutable and impassible, and in which he shares no less when incarnate than he did before (see Tanner (1990, 5, 51, 53, 72–3)).

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[6] Though not universally. See, for instance, Deweese (2007, 148) and Moreland and Craig (2003, 611) for thinkers who note the conciliar support for the teaching that Christ has two wills, one human, and one divine, in the Third Council of Constantinople, yet deny the teaching.

[7] Some interlocutors have claimed that I overemphasize Leo's Tome, or that I give it more weight than it had in the era of its origin. This is a historical point that might well be the case. Perhaps I do employ Leo's Tome more than it was employed then. I think it would be hard to emphasize it more than the councils did, though. For the conciliar fathers at Third Constantinople write of the council that "it approves . . . the Tome of the all-holy and most blessed Leo, pope of the same elder Rome, which was sent to Flavian, who is among the saints, and which that synod called a pillar of right belief" (Tanner 1990, 126–7). The synod they refer to is the Council of Chalcedon, which writes that the Tome: "is in agreement with great Peter's confession and represents a support we have in common" (Tanner 1990, 85). Moreover, much of the clarification found in the Tome is reflected in other texts from the councils. Finally, while the historical question about how much emphasis the Tome received is interesting, it is not germane to my purposes. For no matter how much or how little it was emphasized, it is clearly accepted by the councils multiple times, and so it counts as a part of Conciliar Christology. For Aquinas's own emphasis on the council of Chalcedon and Leo's Tome, see Barnes (2014) and Gondreau (2018, 141, 150).

[8] The following summary is from Pawl (2016e, 27–8).

(iii) The other nature is a human nature. This nature either (a) is composed of a body ensouled by a rational soul, or (b) entails that the bearer, at least during life, have a body ensouled by a rational soul. According to this nature, Christ is like us in all ways—including having a created will—except sin (see Tanner (1990, 41, 44, 55–6, 69, 86)).

(iv) These two natures were united in a unique, ineffable manner, which leaves the natures whole and intact, able to perform their own individual operations, which they perform in communion with one another. This union can aptly be characterized as similar to the union between a soul and the body it informs (see Tanner (1990, 41, 72)).

(v) Finally, predications are true of the one person, Christ, according to his two natures. Sometimes these predications are true of him according to one nature but explicitly not true of him according to another. In fact, sometimes the natures make *apparently* incompatible predications true of the one Christ. In such circumstances, both expressions are true of the one God-man, though the predications need not be true of both natures of the God-man (see Tanner (1990, 42, 55, 59, 70, 71–2, 78, 80)).

Elsewhere, in chapter 1 of *In Defense of Conciliar Christology*, I provided detailed evidence in support of these five claims.[9] Here I will assume that they are proper interpretations of the conciliar teachings.

The fifth point is closely related to a traditional view oftentimes referred to as the communication of idioms. The doctrine of the communication of idioms states that the predicates apt of Christ in virtue of his humanity—"weary," "suffered," "died"—are aptly said of the person of Christ, even when Christ is referred to by a term that picks him out by his divinity—"God." Likewise, predicates apt of Christ in virtue of his divinity—"omnipotent," "eternal," "necessary"—are aptly said of the person of Christ, even when Christ is referred to by a term that picks him out by his humanity—"man." Solano and de Aldama write that the communication of idioms

> is that participation of properties or exchange, by which a person subsisting in one of two natures, has the other nature and what is proper to that other nature in such a way that he can properly be named by these properties.
>
> (de Aldama and Solano 2014, 170)

For illustration, following Aquinas (*Summa Contra Gentiles* IV q.38), the Word created the stars, and the Word has become a man, so it is true that a

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[9] For assertions of these claims from various Christian denominational backgrounds, see the Catholic dogmatists Ludwig Ott (1960, 146) and Joseph Pohle (1913, 89–116); the early and important Lutheran theologian Martin Chemnitz (1971, 37); and the Reformed systematic theologians Herman Bavinck (2006, 298–302) and Louis Berkhof (1965, 315–22).

man created the stars. Likewise, Jesus Christ suffered, and Jesus Christ is God, so it is true that God suffered.[10]

The communication of idioms does not require that the predicates said of one of the natures communicate to the other nature. The divine nature is aptly predicated by "eternal" and "immutable"; the human nature is aptly predicated by "temporal" and "mutable." The communication of idioms does not require us to say all four of these predicates of each nature.[11]

One final point. It is important to draw a distinction between what we might call the *ontological* phenomenon of bearing a property and the *linguistic* phenomenon of having a predicate apt of a thing. Consider an example. I'm now sitting. That's the way that I am in reality, and that way will include some ontological story for how reality has to be for it to be true that I'm sitting. Perhaps I instantiate the Platonic Sittingness universal. Perhaps I have an inhering accident. Perhaps something else. Whatever the correct metaphysical story is, there's an ontological phenomenon afoot. On the other hand, there's the linguistic phenomenon of it being true, now, to say of me, "Pawl is sitting." That predicate, "sitting," is apt of this guy, Pawl. As I use the term, a predicate is *apt* of a subject when the predication ascribing that predicate to the subject is true.

This distinction is important when considering the communication of idioms, and in Christology more generally as well. The communication of idioms, as I am representing it here, is a linguistic construct.[12] It tells us which predicates we can aptly apply to the Divine Word, Jesus Christ. It is silent on the exact nature of the ontological phenomenon that undergirds those predications. The communication of idioms, all by itself, is consistent with a variety of different views of the ontological phenomenon that undergirds the predications that it allows. For instance, the communication of idioms is consistent with the story being a Platonic story wherein the assumed human nature and the person of the Word both instantiate the universal, Cruciformity, when Jesus is hung on the cross. The communication of idioms is likewise consistent with the ontological phenomenon that undergirds the predication "the Son is hanging on the cross" being the human nature having an inhering accident, with no property being ontologically borne by the Word. My preferred view has it that neither the Word proper nor the divine nature

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[10] It is important to note here that these illustrations most often include a clarifying qualifier. A man (in his divine nature) created the stars; God (in his human nature) suffered.

[11] Interestingly, the communication of idioms does require us to say all four predicates of the person of the Word, once he is incarnate. I've given an account of such predications in chap. 7 of *In Defense of Conciliar Christology*.

[12] De Aldama and Solano (2014, 170–1) differentiate between the communication of idioms and what they call the predication of idioms, which is a linguistic representation of the ontological reality of the one person having both natures and their features. But they admit that hardly anyone else makes such a distinction.

instantiates universals or bears accidents. Any such instantiating or bearing, on my preferred view, is done by the assumed human nature. The communication of idioms alone, though, does not require my preferred view.[13]

IV. THE METAPHYSICAL TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Conciliar Christology teaches that Christ was (and is) one *person* with two *natures*. Those terms, "person" and "nature," are terms of art. One ought not to pick a contemporary interpretation of either of those terms and read it back into the documents of Conciliar Christology. Instead, I will define these terms with an eye toward their conciliar usage, as well as the definitions that they have received from earlier ages of theologians. The definitions I settle on are primarily western and scholastic, though that is not to say that they are uninfluenced by the eastern patristics.

IV.a. "Supposit" and "Person"

A person is traditionally understood to be a supposit of a rational nature. Thus, in order to define the term "person," one must first define the term "hypostasis" or "supposit" (these being terms for the same concept in Greek and Latin, respectively). A supposit must fulfill certain conditions.[14] Here is how Aquinas spells those conditions out, using "individual substance" to refer to a supposit:

> The "individual substance," which is included in the definition of a person, implies a complete substance subsisting of itself and separate from all else; otherwise, a man's hand might be called a person, since it is an individual substance; nevertheless, because it is an individual substance existing in something else, it cannot be called a person; nor, for the same reason, can the human nature in Christ, although it may be called something individual and singular.[15]

A supposit is an individual substance that must be complete and separate from all else, which as we see, rules out a hand or Christ's human nature as being supposits. It must be a substance, which rules out its being an accident or

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[13] For a discussion of which predicates communicate and why, see Pawl (2016e, 54–5; 62–5).
[14] To see more discussion of the terms "supposit" and "hypostasis," see Adams (2005a, 37–8), Carlson (2012, 129, 259), Freddoso (1986, 28, 49), Geddes (1911), Gorman (2000b, 2017, chap. 1), St. John Damascus (1958, 20, 56), Pohle (1911, 222), Rebenich (2002, 73), de Aldama and Solano (2014, 42–3), and Tanner (2001, 32).
[15] St Thomas Aquinas (1920), *ST* (*Summa Theologiae*) III q.16 a.12 ad.2. I cite this passage in Pawl (2016e, 30), noting that I owe it to Leonard Geddes (1911).

feature of a thing. It must not be sustained in another by means of subsisting in that other.

Elsewhere, following the medieval tradition, I have employed the following definition of "supposit," which is paraphrased from Ockham and provided in different places by both Marilyn Adams (Adams and Cross 2005b, 37–8) and Alfred Freddoso (1986, n. 4):

Supposit (Hypostasis)	*X* is a supposit (hypostasis) if and only if *x* is a complete being, incommunicable by identity, not apt to inhere in anything, and not sustained by anything. (Pawl 2016e, 32)

Perhaps a few words of explanation are in order. Of the conditions on the right-hand side of the "if and only if," three of the four are there to rule out theological complications. The first, completeness in being, rules out parts of supposits themselves counting as supposits. This is the condition not included to ward off theological complications. Rather, it is included to rule out metaphysical and integral parts as supposits. The remaining three, which I go on to discuss now, are all there for the sake of avoiding theological problems.

The next condition on the right-hand side of the biconditional, *incommunicability by identity*, is there to rule out the divine nature from counting as a supposit. As we will see when discussing the definition of personhood, since the divine nature is a rational nature, were it a supposit, it would then count as a person. But that would render one too many divine persons. There would be the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, then, in addition, the divine nature would be a fourth person. Thus, to avoid such an unfortunate entailment, the definition of supposit has to preclude the nature from counting as a supposit. To do that, the Medievals thought that since the persons of the Trinity have the very same identical nature, no such shareable nature can fulfill the conditions for being a supposit. They refer to that unique shareability as communicability by identity.[16]

The third condition, *not apt to inhere in anything*, precludes accidental features of things from counting as supposits, even if they are not inhering in a substance. This clause is included in the definition of supposit because of certain views of the nature of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. On standard views of transubstantiation, the accidental features of the substances

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[16] Here, as elsewhere in this book, I am leaving to one side questions concerning the Trinity. Some thinkers claim that each divine person is *identical with* the divine nature. In such a case, provided that Leibniz's Law is true (if *x* and *y* are identical, then anything true of *x* is true of *y* and vice versa), the divine nature would be a supposit after all, since each divine person is a supposit. The notions of nature, person, and supposit raise interesting and subtle questions for the doctrine of the Trinity. But one cannot do all things at all times. Were I required to give a metaphysical account of the Trinity here in the preliminaries section of a book on Christology, I would never reach the central content of this book.

of bread and wine remain on the altar (say), but the substances themselves are changed wholly into the substances of Christ's body and blood.[17] In such a scenario, though, many, including St Thomas, thought that the accidents remain without inhering in any substance.[18] For instance, the whiteness of the wafer remains, as the eye can see, but it does not inhere in the substance of Christ's body. Christ, the person, does not become white, circular, weighing a gram etc. In such a situation, one would have a being that is not part of a larger unified whole, since it does not inhere in anything, but it should not count as a supposit, in such a case. To preclude its being a supposit, this third condition is included.

The final condition is in place to preclude the human nature of Christ from being counted as a supposit. For, by the same reasoning concerning the divine nature above, were the human nature of Christ a supposit, then it would count as a person. But were it a person, then there'd be *two* persons in the incarnation, and that's one too many for Conciliar Christology. One ought not to read the "sustained" in that fourth condition as meaning "kept in existence by God." For everything that is not God is sustained in such a manner.[19] Rather, to be "sustained" in the sense relevant to this definition is to be assumed by another, as the human nature of Christ is assumed by the divine person of the Word.[20]

A worry arises here. It appears that these conditions are ad hoc, provided only for avoiding theological counterexamples. But doesn't that count as grounds for dismissal? I see what's happening here in a different light. Suppose some finding in science makes it clear that we need to add a qualification to some generalization that we previously thought was unqualified. Perhaps we discover a type of entity that does not behave in a way we initially thought everything behaves. What to do? On my view, if the data are beyond reproach, then we ought to change our generalizations to fit them. The defender of Conciliar Christology will say that a similar thing is happening here. We thought we had a good notion of what it is to be a supposit. But then we brought God into the picture and, well, it turns out an ontology with God involves more qualifications than one without God. In hindsight, we probably should have seen that coming. God's inner life (the Trinity and relations of the divine persons to one another and to the divine nature) doesn't fit nicely with the metaphysics we formed by looking at the world. Likewise, the miracles

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[17] For recent discussions of the Eucharist from an analytic perspective, see Adams (2010), Arcadi (2013, 2015, 2016b), Baber (2013a, 2013b), Brown (2007), Conn (2003), Pawl (2012b, 2017b), Pruss (2008), Sullivan and Reedy (1991), and Toner (2011).

[18] See Aquinas's *ST* III q.77 aa.1–2.

[19] If the reader believes that not everything is so sustained, surely she and other contingent, causally affectable creatures are so sustained. Insofar as she is sustained, she wouldn't count as a supposit if this fourth condition of the term meant simply caused to remain in existence.

[20] For more discussion of the appropriate sense of "sustained," see de Aldama and Solano (2014, 42–53).

God brings about—for instance, the incarnation and the Eucharist—complicate the non-miraculous metaphysics we posited. Honestly, I'd find it vastly more surprising if God's inner life and the greatest miracles of the faith could be explained in terms drawn exclusively from non-theological metaphysical speculation.

With a definition of "supposit" in place, the definition of "person" is easy to provide. A person is a supposit with a rational nature.[21] That is, I will understand the term as follows in this book:

> *Person*   *X* is a person if and only if *x* is a supposit with a rational nature (Pawl 2016e, 32).

Note that this term is *not* used in the currently familiar sense of the word, wherein something counts as a person if it has certain attributes, such as intellection or volition. For, as we will see later, Christ has two such centers of volition—one divine, and one human—and yet, on the traditional doctrine, Christ is but one person, not two.

IV.b. Nature: Abstract or Concrete

Conciliar Christology claims that the Word assumed a human nature. What sort of thing is such a nature? I argue in this subsection that it is a composite of body and soul, and not an abstract entity.[22]

On the Abstract view of natures, the thing that the Word assumed, the thing that came to be in a hypostatic union with the divine nature, is an abstract, shareable thing. On the Concrete view, the thing assumed is a concrete, non-shareable thing.[23] We can find this distinction put well in the literature. For instance, Dubray says in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*:

> A few special remarks must be added concerning human nature. This expression may mean something concrete, more or less different in various individuals, or more generally something common to all men, i.e., the abstract human nature by which mankind as a whole is distinguished from other classes of living beings.
>
> (Dubray 1911)

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[21] For more discussions of this notion of person, see Adams and Cross (2005b, 23–4), Aquinas (2012, 13), Carlson (2012, 204), Cupitt (1977, 135), Ferrier (1962, 81), Flint (2012, 189), Geddes (1911), Gorman (2011, 430), Lonergan (2016, 387–9), Pohle (1911, 224), Sturch (1991, 269–74), Twombly (2015, 57–60), Wesche (1997, 95, 126), C. J. F. Williams (1968, 517).

[22] The argument in this section is a truncated version of the argumentation I give in chap. 2, sect. II.b of Pawl (2016e).

[23] Not shareable in the sense that it is not shareable as a property is shareable. We will see in Chapter 2, Section II.d., that there is a different sense in which even a concrete nature may be shareable. See also Hasker (2016, 434–5), Leftow (2004, 278), and Marmodoro and Hill (2008, 101) for more discussion of this distinction.

Alvin Plantinga makes the same distinction in slightly different wording. He writes:

> [I]n the first sense, the term "human nature" denotes a *property* (or, if you like, group of properties): the property P which is such that necessarily, every human being has P, and necessarily, whatever has P is a human being. In the second sense the term "human nature" denotes a *concrete human being* rather than a property. In this second sense, the thing denoted by "human nature" and that gets assumed is a human being, a concrete object, not an abstract object like a property. I'll therefore call the first view the "abstract nature" view, and the second the "concrete nature" view.   (Plantinga 1999, 184)[24]

For a third example, Oliver Crisp writes:

> Some philosophical theologians speak of concrete- and abstract-nature views of the human nature of Christ. A concrete-nature view is one that states that Christ's human nature is a concrete particular, perhaps a human body, but, traditionally, a human body and human soul distinct from the Word. An abstract-nature view says that Christ's human nature is a property, or set of properties, necessary and sufficient for being human.   (Crisp 2007c, 41)

Elsewhere, I have attempted to capture this distinction with the following pair of truth conditions:

Abstract Nature x is an abstract nature of some type, y, if and only if x is a property or complex of properties the instantiation of which by a thing is necessary and sufficient for that thing's being (a) y. (Pawl 2016e, 35)

Concrete Nature x is a concrete nature of some type, y, if and only if x is an individual instance of y, and y is an infima species.[25] (Pawl 2016e, 36)

The dog is an individual instance of a certain type—say, it is a beagle. The dog is the concrete nature. But then, on the abstract view, there are the properties

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[24] Plantinga here calls the thing assumed the human being, which is not consonant with the traditional view. On the traditional view, Christ, the Second Person of the Trinity, is a human being. He becomes a human being by assuming a concrete human nature, which itself is not a human being, in the typical sense of the term "human being." Put otherwise, "human being" is often used in the tradition to refer to a supposit with a human nature. Such a thing, a supposit with a human nature, is not assumed. For the thing assumed was no supposit. Brian Leftow (2004, 279) makes what I take to be the same point.

[25] An infima species is the lowest level kind type under which a thing falls. As Dubray, Plantinga, and Crisp show, one needn't refer to infima species to define a concrete nature. I do it in order to ensure that Christ has two natures, and not more. For were, say, mammal, to count as a nature which Christ has, and were infima species not required, then Christ would have three natures—divine, human, mammalian. To rule out having too many natures in the God-man, I preclude higher-level nature types from counting as proper substitution instances for y in this definition.

jointly necessary and sufficient for being a beagle. That is, there are the properties (*x*), that are sufficient for being a beagle (*y*).

This definition of a concrete nature has been challenged in a penetrating review by Joseph Jedwab (2018). He claims that, on this definition, there are too many concrete natures. For, the Divine nature is clearly a concrete nature. But then, each divine person also fulfills the truth conditions for being a divine nature, insofar as each divine person is an individual instance of divinity. Likewise, the human nature of Christ is a human nature, but so is the person of the Word, insofar as he is an individual instance of humanity. So, Jedwab claims, on my proffered definition of concrete nature, there are four divine natures and two human natures. But this, of course, is precluded by Conciliar Christology, which is adamant that there is only one of each nature involved in the Trinity and incarnation.

In reply to Jedwab's criticism, I concede that if an "individual instance" of humanity is just anything that can be predicated by "is human," and similarly for divinity, then I've got far too many concrete natures running around on my theory. Because of that, I must either revise the definition or clarify the meaning of "individual instance" so that it doesn't have that unfortunate entailment. In my own thought, I've always considered the individual instances in question to be what are standardly called the natures. That is, I've taken the individual instance of divinity, not to be the persons, but to be the one thing shared (in whatever sense) by those persons. Likewise, I've taken the individual instance of humanity, not to be the Word, but to be the thing assumed by the Word in the incarnation.

My intent in defining the terms was to stay consonant with a certain traditional understanding of natures. That understanding is aptly presented by Fr Joseph Dalmau, SJ, in his *On the One and Triune God*, where he writes:

> The essence or nature of the thing is said to be that which constitutes the thing intimately and substantially; it places the thing in a certain order of beings and radically separates it from other orders of things.   (Dalmau 2016, IIA:68)

Here Dalmau notes two aspects of a nature, one concerning what (and how) it constitutes, the second concerning how the nature relates to the species under which the thing falls. Both are important points, but I will focus on the latter here. The nature is that in virtue of which a thing is in a certain order of being. Moreover, the nature is not abstract, insofar as it intimately constitutes the thing in question. This added explanatory relation, when included in the concept of the individual instance, will provide for us the right number of natures in the Trinity and incarnation. For in virtue of having one and the same divine nature, the three divine persons are all aptly called "divine." And it is in virtue of having the assumed human nature that Christ is aptly called "human." But while the Holy Spirit is truly divine, the Holy Spirit does not explain why he is divine; his nature does. And while the Son is truly human, the Son himself does not explain why he is human; his human nature does.

Where does this leave us with the definition of concrete nature? We could understand "individual instance" such that it includes the explanatory aspect that Dalmau describes. In that case, the definition can remain as it is. But that seems contrived. That's not the typical sense of "individual instance," and it appears to be added here only to be able to retain the original definition I offered. Perhaps, then, we should revise the initial definition so that it explicitly includes the explanatory aspect. In any case, the reader should understand the added explanatory relation to be included in my speaking of concrete natures.

The natural question to ask at this point is whether the nature assumed by Christ was abstract or concrete. On behalf of the Concrete view, it is claimed to have been the considered view of the early Alexandrian school (Spence 2008, 43), including that of Cyril (Wesche 1997, 86), of Emperor Justinian (Wesche 1997, 166; Riches 2016, 119), of Leontius of Byzantium (Cross 2002, 265; Grillmeier 1965, 2.2:193), of the Medievals (Adams and Cross 2005b, 26; Adams 2006, 123, 2009, 250; Cross 1989, 2002, 265, 2005, 218; Freddoso 1986, 30–2; Stump 2004, 206–7, 2005, 409), of Orthodox doctrine (Alfeyev 2012, 285), of Luther and Calvin (Cross 2005, 26), of Zwingli (Cross 1996a, 115), of Turretin (Crisp 2007c, 133), of Chemnitz (Chemnitz 1971, 30, 58), and of more recent systematic theologians and philosophers, including Herman Bavinck (2006, 304–8), Oliver Crisp (2009, 105–6), Stephen Hipp (2001, 481), Joseph Pohle (1911, 227), Katherin Rogers (2010, 96), and C. J. F Williams (1968, 518). Recently, Wellum (2016, 307) has written that the Chalcedonian Definition of Faith implies the claim that "the Son took to himself a complete human nature, which was comprised of a 'rational soul and body'" and that

> orthodoxy claims, the Son, in taking on our humanity, assumes a concrete human nature which includes all attributes *essential* to humanity.
>
>   (Wellum 2016, 451 emphasis in the original)

These claims do not strike me as wrong.

On the other side, Moreland and Craig (2003, 598) claim that both the Alexandrian and Antiochene schools affirmed the abstract view, Richard Cross (2002, 250) and Stephen Hipp (2001, 471–2) claim it to be the view of the Cappadocians. Emperor Justinian (Wesche 1997, 48–9) and St John of Damascus (1958, 56, 104) can be cited in its favor, and, among contemporary thinkers, Louis Berkhof (1965, 321), Stephen Davis (2011, 117), John McIntyre (1966, 105), Thomas Senor (2011, 88), and Augustus Strong (1907, 695), to name a few, affirm it.[26]

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[26] For others who discuss the nature of natures, see Arcadi (2016a), Crisp (2011a, 2011b, 124–9, 2016, chaps 5 & 6), Deweese (2007, 142–3), Edwin Chr Van Driel (2008, 104) and Lonergan (2016, 412–26). For a general listing and summary of who thinks what about the nature of Christ, see Pawl (2016e, chap. 2, II.b.ii and II.b.iii).

What of the councils themselves? Do they contain reason for thinking that they were employing the term in either of these two senses? Again, scholars are divided. On the one hand, Richard Cross (1996b, 171), Gerald O'Collins (2002b, 70), and Philip Schaff (1919, 30) all see the abstract view as the view employed in the documents of the Council of Chalcedon. Sarah Coakley (2004, 148, 162), on the other hand, argues that the Definition of faith from Chalcedon is silent on the ontology of Christ's human nature. I think Coakley is correct, though I think other parts of Conciliar Christology—for instance, the parts mentioned in Table 1.1, are more consonant with the concrete reading of natures than the abstract reading. Borrowing a third hand, in my own view, shared with others such as Wellum (2016, 451), I believe that the councils, including Chalcedon, are best understood as referring to a concrete human nature. In defense of this claim, I provided two arguments, which I called the *Leonine* argument and the *Cyrillic* argument, based on where one finds the most evidence in the conciliar texts for the second premise of each argument (Pawl 2016e, 39–41). In brief, the arguments go like this: either the nature referred to in the councils is abstract or concrete. If abstract, then the term "nature" cannot be paraphrased in *this certain way*, and the nature couldn't be predicated by *this term*. But in the councils, "nature" is so paraphrased, and the nature is so predicated. Thus, the nature is not abstract. Thus, the nature is concrete. In Table 1.1 I present these two arguments, along with evidence from the councils for the relevant paraphrasing and predicating.

The derivations are valid, but are the premises true? Proof for Premises 2 and 5 is provided in Table 1.1. Concerning Premises 1 and 4, I think it is clear that an abstract thing cannot hang, be pierced, or be composed of a body and an intellectual soul. If something is an abstract, shareable property or set of properties, as the abstract nature is claimed to be, then it is not something with blood, or flesh to be pierced, or a soul. But then an abstract thing cannot be the thing referred to by the councils in these texts.

For these reasons, I disagree with Cross, O'Collins, and Schaff, who claim, as we saw above, that the texts of Chalcedon took an abstract view of Christ's human nature. For the remainder of this book, when I refer to Christ's human nature, or "CHN," I will be referring to that nature which was composed of flesh possessed by a rational soul, which hung on a cross, from which blood and water flowed.

I should note that I am *not* saying that there is no such thing as an abstract human nature. On some soteriological views, Christ must possess an abstract nature so that his merits can spread to other possessors of that same abstract nature. I do not find this soteriological view in the contents of Conciliar Christology, but I do not intend my arguments here to rule it out, either. My goal here is to show that when the councils refer to Christ's human nature, that nature, at least in the cases I present above, is a concrete thing. Put otherwise, the human relatum of assumption, according to Conciliar

Table 1.1. Conciliar Arguments for Concrete Christology

The Leonine Argument	The Cyrillic Argument
1. If the human nature of Christ referred to in the councils is the sort of thing that can hang on a cross, be pierced, weep, feel pity, and say "the Father is greater than I," then the human nature of Christ referred to in the councils is a concrete nature.	4. If the human nature hypostatically united to the divine nature in the incarnation is aptly referred to by "flesh enlivened by a rational soul" (41), a "holy body rationally ensouled" (44), and "human flesh which is possessed by a rational and intellectual soul" (115), then the human nature of Christ is concrete.
2. The human nature of Christ referred to in the councils is the sort of thing that can hang on a cross, be pierced, weep, feel pity, and say "the Father is greater than I."	5. The human nature hypostatically united to the divine nature in the incarnation is aptly referred to by the three above quotations.
3. The human nature of Christ referred to in the councils is a concrete nature. (From 1, 2.)	6. Thus, the human nature of Christ is concrete. (From 4, 5.)

Evidence for 2	Evidence for 5
A. It does not belong to the same nature [*non eiusdem naturae est*] to weep out of deep-felt pity for a dead friend, and to call him back to life again at the word of command … or to hang on the cross and … to make the elements tremble; or to be pierced by nails and to open the gates of paradise for the believing thief. Likewise, it does not belong to the same nature to say *I and the Father are one*, and to say *The Father is greater than I* (Leo's Tome to Flavian, 80). B. [I]f he accepts the Christian faith and does not turn a deaf ear to the preaching of the gospel, let him consider what nature it was that hung, pierced with nails, on the wood of the cross [*quae natura transfixa clavis pependerit in crucis ligno*]. With the side of the crucified one laid open by the soldier's spear, let him identify the source from which blood and water flowed, to bathe the church of God with both font and cup (81).	C. Cyril says Mary is the mother of God (*theotokos*) "because there was born from her his holy body rationally ensouled, with which the Word was hypostatically united and is said to have been begotten in the flesh" (44). D. Anathema 4: "… finally, if anyone does not accept the teaching of the holy fathers that *the union occurred of the Word of God with human flesh which is possessed by a rational and intellectual soul*, and that this union is by synthesis or by person, and that therefore there is only one person, namely the lord Jesus Christ, one member of the Holy Trinity: let him be anathema." (115, emphasis added.)

Christology, is a concrete composite of flesh and blood, body and soul. It is not a universal, shareable thing. Christ may well have participated in, or instantiated, or exemplified (or . . .) such a shareable thing as well. But that shareable thing was not the thing hypostatically united to the divine nature in the ineffable union. In such a case, in an equivocal fashion, there would be three natures involved in the incarnation. For there would be the two concrete natures, and also the abstract human nature. This would not be contrary to Conciliar Christology insofar as there still remain exactly two natures *in the relevant sense* in the incarnation. In fact, speaking in this way—saying that

there are three natures in the incarnation—would be imprudent, insofar as it would lead some into the error of thinking that there are three natures *in the same sense* in the incarnation.

IV.c. What Concrete Natures Can Do

In Section IV.b. and elsewhere in this book, I write of a concrete nature doing something, say, hanging or bleeding. Some readers might look askance at this practice. I hasten to note, however, that this practice is one I take up from the ecumenical conciliar documents. For those very documents predicate a vast variety of predicates of the human nature of Christ, as I discussed in defense of the second premise of the Leonine argument. As Fr Kenneth Baker writes (2013, 37), "A nature is understood by philosophers and theologians to be a principle of operation. A nature then is active through its powers—it causes things to happen in the real world."

The councils predicate what we might think of as *physical* predicates, as when Leo, in his Tome to Flavian included in the Council of Chalcedon, predicates of the human nature that it hangs and was pierced.[27] They predicate *intellectual* predicates of the human nature, as when the same Leo says that the human nature says "the Father is greater than I."[28] They predicate *volitional* predicates of the human nature of Christ in the Exposition of faith from the Third Council of Constantinople, which says of the human nature that it wills.[29]

Such predication of physical, intellectual, or volitional predicates to the assumed human nature of Christ is common in non-conciliar writings of church fathers central to the earliest councils, for instance Athanasius (Anatolios 2004, 70–2, 140; Riches 2016, 44), Cyril of Alexandria (Bellitto 2002, 24; Relton 1917, 56; Riches 2016, 53), Pope Leo the Great (Neil 2009, 110) and Maximus the Confessor (Riches 2016, 138–9). We find it as well in medieval Christologies.

Marilyn McCord Adams, in her excellent little book, *What Sort of Human Nature?: Medieval Philosophy and the Systematics of Christology*, provides bountiful illustrations. Anselm refers to Christ's human nature as "impeccable," and Adams's summary of his views includes the following lines:

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[27] "So if he accepts the Christian faith and does not turn a deaf ear to the preaching of the gospel, let him consider what nature it was that hung, pierced with nails, on the wood of the cross" (Tanner 1990, 81).

[28] "Likewise, it does not belong to the same nature to say *I and the Father are one*, and to say *the Father is greater than I*" (Tanner 1990, 80).

[29] "[T]he difference of the natures being made known in the same one subsistence in that each nature wills and performs the things that are proper to it in a communion with the other" (Tanner 1990, 129).

> Like ours, Christ's human nature is taken from Adam's race. Like ours, it is capable of suffering and death…As to differences, Christ's human nature was created without "taint" of original sin…Unlike us, Christ's human will was unable to will to sin…" (Adams 1999, 16)

Moreover, she writes of Anselm's views that "his characterization of Christ's human nature coincides with a mainstream of patristic conclusions." She writes that Peter Lombard thought that, since Christ's human nature is united to the Word contingently, that if it were not so united, then it, the nature, "could sin as much as any other human nature could" (Adams 1999, 19). She writes that Aquinas claimed that Christ's human nature enjoys the beatific vision (Adams 1999, 52). Indeed, one can easily find passages where Aquinas is willing to say that Christ's human nature is visible (*ST* III q.8 a.1 ad.3), it is passable (*ST* III q.14 a.1 ad.2), it has corporeal defects (*ST* III q.14 a.3 ad.2), and other things. Indeed, when discussing the power of the assumed human nature, Aquinas writes, citing Leo's Tome for evidence:

> in Christ the human nature has its proper form and power whereby it acts; and so has the Divine. Hence the human nature has its proper operation distinct from the Divine, and conversely. (*ST* III q.19 a.1 resp.)

The council of Trent calls the human nature passible and mortal (Catholic Church 1982, 50–1), and other, later, Catholic councils say similar things of the human nature of Christ.

Later Protestant thinkers likewise predicated robust predicates of Christ's assumed nature. For instance, Martin Luther claimed the human nature of Christ to be ubiquitous due to his atypical view of the communication of idioms (Pohle 1913, 194–6). Marilyn Adams (1999, 97) writes that Luther's view of "penal substitution requires Christ's human nature to be psychologically much more like ours, even to the point of feeling abandoned and cursed by God." The early Lutheran scholar Martin Chemnitz (1971, 191, 216) also attributed robust predicates to the human nature of Christ. Concerning the Reformed, James Gordon, in his work on the *extra calvinisticum*, writes that on "the Reformed account…the Son gives gifts of grace to the assumed human nature" (Gordon 2016, 93). In addition, "Christ's human nature is resurrected" and there is a "real exaltation of Christ's human nature as a result of his redemptive work" (Gordon 2016, 94). Richard Cross (1996a, 115) writes that, on Zwingli's reformed views, the human nature of Christ could be taken up and killed.

The above references to places where theologians predicate robust predicates of the human nature of Christ is certainly not exhaustive. And it isn't even meant to show that the reader *ought* to predicate of the human nature similarly. Rather, my goal is to show that this is not a new-fangled way of speaking. It is not outside the boundaries of traditional, orthodox speech.

Nevertheless, if the reader still finds that such predications, while strong in conciliar, patristic, and medieval pedigree, are absolutely anathema to correct Christology, then no doubt such a reader will have a means of paraphrasing away such worrisome texts. Perhaps the authors *meant* that only the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity had the relevant attributes apt of him, not his assumed human nature, but worded it poorly. Perhaps they meant by such wording that the Word was certain ways, and that his human nature was *not* such ways. It would be a peculiar way of saying such a thing, no doubt. It is a most unfortunate way to talk, especially in the context they were in, where care over language was so needful for combating heresies.

In any case, if the reader has such qualms and an adjoining paraphrase scheme for removing the offending claims, then I suggest the reader use that same paraphrase scheme when reading this book. In fact, often in this book I provide a paraphrase for such claims. For instance, when discussing Christ's freedom with respect to his human will in Chapter 5, Section II, I provide multiple different ways of wording the claim, many of which do not require predicates such as "wills" to be apt of the human nature of Christ.[30] I have my own misgivings about such paraphrase schemes. But I will not rule them out at the outset. If opponents of robust predicates can find a viable paraphrase scheme, more power to them.

V. CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have laid the groundwork for the future considerations of extensions to Conciliar Christology. I have presented the relevant teachings of the councils, as well as the ways in which I understand the specialized terminology those councils employ (i.e., hypostasis, person, nature). In the next and following chapters, I will present extensions to Conciliar Christology, and consider arguments for the conclusion that such extensions, when taken in union with Conciliar Christology, imply contradictions. If we find, as I believe we do, after careful consideration of the extant philosophical arguments against the coherence of the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and

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[30] This discussion of the robust predicates apt of Christ according to the Conciliar texts is as good a place as any to note something important: in this book (and everywhere) I am attempting to think with the mind of the orthodox Christian faith; in particular, in consonance with the teachings of the Catholic Church. If, in the end, my interpretation of the councils is incorrect, or if my reasoning, unbeknownst to me, commits me to views contrary to the current or future teaching of the Church, then I renounce those views and the problematic commitments I made which lead to them. John Wycliffe's corpse was exhumed, set on trial, condemned, and burned. That's rough. If my views have the unhappy future of being incongruent with the teachings of the Church, I'd like not to be treated likewise. All this is to say: don't Wycliffe me.

these extensions that they are unsound, then we can conclude, as I intend to, that the extant philosophical arguments against Extended Conciliar Christology do not show that the view is false. In such a case, there might still be reasons for rejecting it from history, or scripture, or tradition, or some other source (I'm not the person to evaluate such arguments). But the objector will not be able to claim, on philosophical grounds, justification for denying Extended Conciliar Christology.

Part 1

Natural Extensions

2

Multiple Interpretations of "Multiple Incarnations"

I. INTRODUCTION

Theologians as diverse as medieval masters (Aquinas, *ST* III q.3), Catholic Neo-Scholastic manual dogmatists (Pohle 1913, 136), and contemporary reformed analytic theologians (Crisp 2009, chap. 8) affirm that multiple incarnations are possible.[1] But one could mean very many different things by that simple assertion. I begin by spelling out four things one might mean by "multiple incarnations." I do so by differentiating four questions concerning the scope of multiple incarnations. Then I provide and justify what I take to be Aquinas's answers to these questions, showing that he holds an extremely robust view of the possibility of multiple incarnations. According to Aquinas, I argue, there could be three simultaneously existing concrete rational natures, each of which is assumed by all three of the divine persons, all at the same time.

   The work of this chapter is presenting this Thomistic view. In Chapter 3, I consider some objections to the possibility of multiple incarnations. There I make use of the divisions I provide in this chapter and argue that the extant philosophical objections to multiple incarnations fail.

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[1] The content of this chapter is taken primarily from my Pawl (2016d). For other discussions of the possibility of multiple incarnations, see Marilyn Adams (1985, 2006, 198–9, 2009, 241; Adams and Cross 2005a), J. P. Arendzen (1941, 161), Fr Kenneth Baker (2013, 47), Sjoerd Bonting (2003), Paul Brazier (2013), William Lane Craig (2006, 63), Oliver Crisp (2008, 2009, chap. 8), Richard Cross (2005, 230–2), Paul Davies (2003), Christopher Fisher and David Fergusson (2006), Thomas Flint (2001b, 312, 2012, 192–8), Alfred Freddoso (1983, 1986), Marie George (2001), Brian Hebblethwaite (2001, 2008, 74), Andrew Jaeger (2017), Fr Roch Kereszty (2002, 382), Peter Kevern (2002), Eric Mascall (1965, 40–1), Thomas Morris (1987, 183), Robin Le Poidevin (2009, 183, 2011), Fr Gerald O'Collins (2002a, 19–23), Fr Joseph Pohle (1913, 136), Fr Michael Schmaus (1971, 241–2), Richard Sturch (1991, 43, 194–200), and Keith Ward (1998, 162).

II. FOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY
OF MULTIPLE INCARNATIONS

There are various weaker and stronger ways of understanding the claim that it is possible for there to be multiple incarnations. One might merely mean that more than one type of nature *could be* assumed. Maybe there are or could be Martians, and some divine person could assume a Martian nature. Or by claiming that multiple incarnations are possible, one might mean that the number of concrete human natures (i.e., flesh and blood composites) the Son could assume throughout the course of creation is greater than one, or that the number of concrete natures the Son could assume *at the same time* is greater than one. Or one might mean that other divine persons (i.e., the Father, the Holy Spirit) could become incarnate. Or perhaps one might mean that a single concrete nature might be assumable by more than one divine person. In what follows, I will expound upon these options by differentiating four questions one might be answering by affirming the possibility of multiple incarnations.

II.a. The Natural Question

A first question that one can ask when considering the possibility of multiple incarnations is: *What is required on the part of the assumed nature for incarnation?* Call this the "Natural Question."

By affirming the possibility of multiple incarnations, one might merely mean that the Son could have become incarnate in a human nature different from the nature he in fact assumed. In such a sense, the word "multiple" is meant to convey that since it is possible for Christ to become incarnate in the nature he actually became incarnate in (call that assumed nature "Christ's Human Nature," or "CHN" for short), and he can also become incarnate in another possible concrete human nature, call it CHN*, then multiple incarnations are possible. Or one might mean that the Son could have become incarnate in an entirely different type of rational concrete nature, for instance, perhaps a Martian concrete nature. Or one might throw the net of possibility even wider, claiming that the Son could have become incarnate in a non-rational type of nature, for instance, the concrete nature of a cow or donkey.[2] Marilyn Adams (2006, 198) writes of Scotus's view on the matter: "Scotus explicitly acknowledges that any and every created thing (*res*) could become assumed by (be hypostatically united to) a divine person." If what is required on the part of the assumed nature is that it be identical to CHN, the nature that

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[2] This is a possibility that Marilyn McCord Adams (2006, 135–8) discusses at length. See also Adams (1985, 2009, 241). Oliver Crisp (2007c, 84) notes that Ockham thought the Son could become incarnate in a donkey. See Cuff (2015, 366–71) for a discussion of Jacques de Thérines's thoughts on the Natural Question.

the Word actually assumed in this creation, then multiple incarnations are not possible in any sense considered thus far. But if something weaker is required, say, merely being human, or merely being rational, then there is room for at least some ways of answering the Nature Question with a "yes."

II.b. The Personal Question

A second question concerns *who* can become incarnate: *Which divine persons can become incarnate?* Call this the "Personal Question."

Perhaps only the Son can become incarnate.[3] Or one might think that only the Son and the Holy Spirit are able to become incarnate. Or that all three could become incarnate. Or any of the other permutations of the logical possibilities.

If one were to think that more than one divine person could become incarnate, then one would do well to answer the Natural Question concerning the other Persons, too. Is there reason to think that the natures assumable by the Son are different from the natures assumable by the Spirit? Might the Son be able to assume non-rational natures, whereas the Spirit is only able to assume rational natures? If so, why?

II.c. The Temporal Question

A third question we might ask when considering the possibility of multiple incarnations is the following: *What are the requirements concerning the timing of incarnations?* Call this the "Temporal Question."

One might view multiple incarnations in any one creation as impossible. Or one might view multiple incarnations in the same creation as possible but judge multiple *simultaneous* incarnations as impossible. Perhaps the Son can only become incarnate in one nature at a time. Or one might judge as possible multiple, simultaneous incarnations, wherein the same divine person assumes two distinct concrete human natures the existence of which overlap at at least one time.[4]

The answers to the Natural, Personal, and Temporal Questions are, for the most part, logically independent. For instance, one might think that the correct answer to the Natural Question is that the assumed nature must be some human nature or other. That claim does not preclude one from answering the Temporal and Personal Questions in any of the ways canvassed. Likewise, if one were to think that the answer to the Natural Question is that the nature

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[3] Schmaus (1971, 242) claims that "[t]he incarnation of another person than the Logos … appears, at the least, unfitting, if not impossible and meaningless."

[4] Richard Cross (2005, 230–2) provides arguments from Scotus and other medievals in which they assume that the Son can assume multiple human natures. Though it isn't explicitly stated that these assumptions are at the same time, the arguments appear to work only if the assumptions are at the same time. Fr Roch Kereszty (2002, 382) claims that one cannot deny the possibility of multiple incarnations of the same divine person.

must be rational, both the possibility of multiple non-overlapping incarnations and the possibility of simultaneous incarnations remain open, as does the possibility of the Holy Spirit assuming a concrete nature.

However, if one thought that the answer to the Natural Question was that the nature must be identical to CHN, then some answers to the Temporal Question become much more difficult to justify. For the idea that there could be two incarnations of the Son in the same nature at the same time is highly dubious. What would it be for the divine and human natures to be doubly united together in the same person, but by different hypostatic unions? Well, there might be a way to understand the double hypostatic union. If there is, then this seemingly difficult case is a case where the answers to the Natural and Temporal Questions are logically independent. And even if one were to think that the proper answer to the Natural Question is that the nature must be identical with CHN, one could still answer the Personal Question in any way one sees fit, since that answer to the Natural Question does not preclude any answer to the Personal Question.

II.d. The Sharing Question

Finally, one might wonder: *Could multiple divine persons become incarnate in the same nature?* Call this the "Sharing Question."

One might think that the Son and Spirit could each become incarnate in the same nature, but not in the same creation. Perhaps in our actual world, the Son assumes CHN, but in another possible world, the Holy Spirit assumes that same concrete nature. (Calling it "CHN" in such a case might then be confusing, since "Christ" is a *name* for the Second Person. The point remains, though, that the nature we are calling by that name, on this view, can be assumed by either the Son or the Spirit, but not both in the same world.) Or one might think that two divine persons could each become incarnate in one concrete nature, but not at the same time. Perhaps the Son could assume a nature for the first five years of its existence, then the Spirit assume that same nature for the next five years. Or one might even think that multiple divine persons could assume the very same concrete nature at the very same time.

Again, the different answers to the Sharing Question seem logically independent from the different available answers to the Natural Question. Even if CHN is the only nature that could possibly be assumed, it does not follow from that claim alone that only one divine person could assume it.

Not all answers to the Sharing Question are logically independent of the answer one gives to the Personal Question. For instance, if one were to answer the Personal Question with the affirmation that only the Son could become incarnate, one would have to answer the Sharing Question with a clear "no." If the Holy Spirit and the Father cannot become incarnate, then they cannot become incarnate and share the same assumed nature.

Finally, not all answers to the Sharing Question are logically independent of the answer one gives to the Temporal Question. For instance, if one does not allow the possibility of more than one incarnation in one creation, then one will have to answer the Sharing Question with a "no" as well. If there cannot be two incarnations at all, then there cannot be two incarnations in which two divine persons share the same assumed nature.

As is clear, there are various ways one might understand the possibility of multiple incarnations. These understandings can be stronger or weaker, and many of them are logically independent of the various answers to the other questions.

In Section III, I will present St Thomas's understanding of the possibility of multiple incarnations, for three reasons. First, St Thomas is a central figure in traditional Christian thought. His having endorsed a view is evidence that it ought at least to be considered, and his influence is so vast that his having endorsed a view is good evidence that many others do so as well. Second, St Thomas is a clear, concise, and orderly author. His discussion of these questions leaves little room for exegetical disagreement. Finally, his view is surprisingly strong, as we will see.

III. THE THOMISTIC UNDERSTANDING OF MULTIPLE INCARNATIONS

In the Third Part of his majestic *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas discusses the questions that I asked in Section II.[5] There we find answers to the Natural Question, the Personal Question, the Temporal Question, and the Sharing Question. I will consider his answers in that order.

III.a. The Thomistic Answer to the Natural Question

Concerning the Natural Question, Aquinas seems to answer that only human natures are capable of assumption. He writes:

> A thing is said to be assumable according to some fitness for such a union. Now this fitness in human nature may be taken from two things, viz. according to its dignity, and according to its need. According to its dignity, because human nature, as being rational and intellectual, was made for attaining to the Word to some extent by its operation, viz. by knowing and loving Him. According to its need—because it stood in need of restoration, having fallen under original sin. Now these two things belong to human nature alone. For in the irrational creature

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[5] To see another discussion of Thomas on multiple incarnations, embedded in a discussion of the consistency of one thing being both divine and human, see Michael Gorman (2016).

the fitness of dignity is wanting, and in the angelic nature the aforesaid fitness of need is wanting. Hence it follows that only human nature was assumable.

(Aquinas 1981, *ST* III q.4 a.1 resp.)[6]

The argument might be put as follows:

1. *x* is assumable if and only if *x* is fit for assumption with respect to dignity and need.
2. *x* is fit for assumption with respect to dignity if and only if *x* is rational and intellectual.
3. *x* is fit for assumption with respect to need if and only if *x* is both in need of restoration and able to be restored.
4. Created natures can be exhaustively divided into the non-rational, the rational-and-human, and the rational-and-angelic.   (Unstated Assumption.)
5. Non-rational natures are not rational and intellectual.
6. Thus, non-rational natures are not fit for assumption with respect to dignity.   (From 2, 5.)
7. Rational-and-angelic natures are not able to be restored.
8. Thus, rational-and-angelic natures are not fit for assumption with respect to need.   (From 3, 7.)
9. Thus, neither non-rational natures nor rational-and-angelic natures are assumable.   (From 1, 6, 8.)
10. Human natures are both (i) rational and intellectual and (ii) in need of restoration and able to be restored.
11. Thus, human natures are fit for assumption with respect to dignity and need.   (From 2, 3, 10.)
12. Thus, human natures are assumable.   (From 1, 11.)
13. Thus, only human natures are assumable.   (From 4, 9, 12.)

Aquinas states premises 1–3 without justification. Premise 4 is a tacit premise that Aquinas does not state, though it is consonant with his views stated elsewhere.[7] Premise 4 is required to derive the final conclusion, 13. Premise 5 also goes without defense, though it seems too obvious to require defense. (If *x* is non-rational—"non-rational" understood as the complement of "rational"—then it is not rational; and if *x* is not rational, then *x* is not both rational and intellectual.) Concerning Premise 7, according to Aquinas (*ST* I q.64 a.2, especially ad.2)—and

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[6] All translations from Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*, unless otherwise noted, are taken from this translation, which is also available at <http://dhspriory.org/thomas/summa>.

[7] Interestingly, John of Damascus (1958, 28) would include both humans and angels as animals, but divide them as to whether or not they are mortal.

many people in the Christian intellectual tradition—angels lack the need for restoration, not insofar as some are not fallen (since he thinks there are fallen angels) but insofar as they lack the ability to repent and come back to right relation with God. One might understand "need" here as analogous to the "need" in the following statement: "He has no need for additional experimental treatments; he is too far gone." Concerning Premise 10, Aquinas assumes it without argumentation; at this point in the *Summa* he has already discussed whether humans can be restored (*ST* I-II q.113) and whether humans are rational (*ST* I q.79). The remainder of the steps in the argument are conclusions logically derivable from these seven premises.

The first thing to notice about this reasoning is that Aquinas is only discussing the inhabitants that he is aware of in this creation. He is not considering the possibility of God creating other types of rational animals in other creations. His reasoning does not count against the possibility of God creating another type of rational creature that falls and can turn back to God. In such a case, an additional disjunct would need to be added to Premise 4: rational-and-Martian (say). And given such a possibility, the hypothesized rational nature could fulfill both conditions required for assumability (dignity and need). And so, I take his argument to support the following Thomistic answer to the Natural Question:

> *The Thomistic Natural Answer*:   What is required on the part of a nature for assumption is that it have the appropriate dignity (e.g., rationality) and that it be possibly restorable to union with God.

If, then, any other types of natures with the appropriate dignity and possibility of restoration are possible, those natures, too, will be assumable.[8]

III.b. The Thomistic Answer to the Personal Question

Aquinas gives an explicit answer to the Personal Question in an article entitled, "Whether each of the divine persons could have assumed [a] human nature." There he writes:

> Whatever the Son can do, so can the Father and the Holy Ghost, otherwise the power of the three Persons would not be one. But the Son was able to become

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[8] One might object at this point that the text I have cited does not rule out the following answer to the Natural Question: The nature must be identical to CHN. I concede that I have not ruled it out. But the answer will be clearly ruled out in the following quotations from Aquinas. A different question one might ask about natures is whether it is possible that a divine person assume a nature of either sex. For discussion of this point in a Thomistic setting, see Gondreau (2018, 145–50, especially footnote 31 and p. 149).

incarnate. Therefore the Father and the Holy Ghost were able to become incarnate.   (*ST* III q.3 a.5 sed contra)[9]

The argument here is straightforward:

14. If one divine person can do *x*, then the other
     two can do *x* as well.
15. The Son can become incarnate.
16. Thus, the Father and Holy Spirit can become   (From 14, 15.)
     incarnate.

There are Trinitarian worries one might have with respect to Premise 14. The Father can beget a divine person. Can the Son and Spirit as well? The Spirit can proceed from at least one other divine person. Can the Father? Leave all these questions to one side. We can retain the force of the argument by reining in Premise 14 so that only things having to do with creation are substitutable for *x*. Then, since proceeding, spirating, and begetting are not actions related to creation, they are not proper substitution instances for *x* in Premise 14. This is not an ad hoc treatment of Premise 14. We find such restrictions to creation in the discussion of divine powers in both the East and West. For just two examples, Cyril of Alexandria says, in his *Five Tomes against Nestorius* (Radde-Gallwitz 2017, 332) "the acting and the willing toward any and every thing goes through the entire holy and consubstantial Trinity." Likewise, Augustine writes in Book V of his *De Trinitate* (Augustine 1991, 198) that "Father and Son are together one origin with reference to creation, just as they are one creator, one God." These two exemplary quotations are not intended to show that Premise 14 is true, or that it must be reined in as suggested. Rather, they are intended to show that it was traditional to make a distinction between the divine activity *ad intra* and the divine activity *ad extra*. It is that distinction which is used to rein in Premise 14.

Premise 14, so reined in, can be supported in a few ways. As Aquinas points out, were, let us say, the Holy Spirit unable to become incarnate, then his power would not be the same as the power of the Son. The Holy Spirit is, however, omnipotent. But he is not omnipotent if there is some type of action that the Son can do that he cannot do. In such a case the Son would have more power than the Spirit, which contradicts the Spirit's omnipotence. And so, if the Son can become incarnate, so can the Spirit. Another support for Premise 14 comes from the *respondeo* of the same article. There Aquinas argues that

[9] Here and elsewhere in this chapter I claim Aquinas believes something based on what he writes in a *sed contra*. Such evidence can be problematic, since he sometimes revises or nuances that reasoning later in his *respondeo* or replies. In the following cases, though, I do not see it as perilous. For he isn't citing an authority, then providing an interpretation of the authority in any of the *sed contra* texts I cite. Rather, he is providing an argument in his own voice, one he does not question or revise in the *respondeo* sections that follow. I thank a referee for raising this point.

the principle of the act is divine power, which is possessed equally by all three persons. Moreover, the term of the act is a person, and all three are equally persons. Thus, nothing relevant to the activity of assumption differentiates one divine person from the others. If one can do it, then, all three can.

In addition, a difference between the reach of the power of the Son and that of the Holy Spirit runs afoul of divine simplicity, and so a proponent of divine simplicity will demand that the powers of the Son and Spirit be the same. Finally, we find similar things said in other important documents. To give just one instance, consider what the Catechism of the Council of Trent says:

> We also confess that He [Jesus] is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, equal in all things to the Father and the Holy Ghost; for in the divine persons nothing unequal or unlike should exist, or even be imagined to exist, since we acknowledge the essence, will and power of all to be one.   (Catholic Church 1982, 37)

Here, too, we see an affirmation of the equality of power of all three divine persons.

Concerning Premise 15, the proponent of the Christology of the first seven Ecumenical Councils must grant it. It is indeed possible for the Son to become incarnate, since the Son *did in fact* become incarnate, and possibility follows from actuality. The assumption of Conciliar Christology at this point is not a questionable dialectical move on my part. For recall, my purpose in this book is to consider the philosophical arguments put forward in an attempt to show that the conjunction of Conciliar Christology with certain other traditional theses is contradictory. Drawing on the resources and implications of Conciliar Christology, then, is fair game.[10]

I take Aquinas's argument to support the following Thomistic answer to the Personal Question:

The Thomistic Personal Answer: Each divine person could become incarnate.

We find this view being asserted by de Aldama and Solano (2014, 63) as well: "It is an opinion common and certain in theology that any person of the Trinity could have become incarnate."

One might worry that this answer entails some condemned proposition or other. For instance, one might worry that, were the Father to become incarnate, then he could suffer.[11] And were the Father to suffer, Patripassianism—the view that the Father suffered and died on the Cross—would be true. But

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[10] For more discussion of this point, see Section II of the Introduction.

[11] The reader may wonder here how it could be that the Father, who is impassible, could possibly suffer. For discussion of how an impassible person could suffer, see my articles (Pawl 2014a, 2016c), which deal with this question concerning Christ. For more recent work on impassibility, see Baines (2015), Gavrilyuk (2006, 2009), Keating and White (2009), Mozley (1926), and Renihan (2015a, 2015b).

that view is condemned in the early church, and so could not be true.[12] Thus, this answer to the Personal Question is precluded by early orthodoxy.

The problem with the above argument is that it commits a subtle modal fallacy. The claim made by the early church is that the Father did not, in fact, in our actual creation, suffer. Sabellius got it wrong when he said that the Father *did, in fact,* suffer. But this leaves open the possibility that the Father *could* suffer, were he to become incarnate. And that claim—the claim of the mere possibility of paternal suffering, given the Father's becoming incarnate—is not unorthodox, and is all that is required for the Thomistic answer to the Personal Question.

III.c. The Thomistic Answer to the Temporal Question

Concerning the Temporal Question, again, Aquinas provides an explicit discussion of this question in an article entitled "Whether one Divine Person can assume two individual natures." There he writes:

> Whatever the Father can do, that also can the Son do. But after the Incarnation the Father can still assume a human nature distinct from that which the Son has assumed; for in nothing is the power of the Father or the Son lessened by the Incarnation of the Son. Therefore it seems that after the Incarnation the Son can assume another human nature distinct from the one He has assumed.
>
> (*ST* III q.3 a.7 sed contra)

The argument might be put as follows:

17. If the Father can do *x*, then the Son can do *x*.
18. The Father can assume a different nature after the Son's assumption of CHN.
19. Thus, the Son can assume a different nature after   (From 17, 18.) his assumption of CHN.

The first premise is a specific instance of Premise 14. I have already discussed a potential Trinitarian difficulty for that premise, and a way of modifying it so as to avoid the difficulty. We could modify Premise 17 similarly if need be. Note that Premise 18, the claim that the Father can assume a nature *different* from the nature the Son assumed (*potest assumere naturam humanam aliam numero ab ea quam filius assumpsit*),[13] entails that Aquinas denied the answer to the Natural Question which had it that only CHN could be assumed. If it is possible that a nature distinct in number from CHN can be assumed, then it is false that only CHN can be assumed.

Aquinas provides justification for Premise 18 in the *respondeo* of the same article. There he argues that we can consider the Father's assumption of a

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human nature in light of the power of assuming, and also in light of the terms of union. With respect to the power, the three divine persons have numerically the same power; it isn't three powers of the same type, it is the very same token of power. And that power wasn't decreased in any way due to the Son's incarnation. Hence, the Father isn't unable to assume a human nature by reason of lack of power. Concerning the terms of union, they are the divine person and the human nature. We know that human natures can be assumed, since the Son has assumed one. The last place for a problem to arise, then, is in the other term, the divine person. Can the Father assume? We know that divine persons can assume, in virtue of their power. The Father is a divine person with the exact same power. So, he can assume, too.

The reasons already given in this section show that Aquinas thought that it is possible for there to be multiple incarnations by different divine persons. But less clear is whether the incarnations could be simultaneous. Aquinas writes "after the incarnation" (*post incarnationem*) which is ambiguous as to whether the reference is to *after the first moment of* the incarnation, on the one hand, or to *after the conclusion of* the incarnation, on the other. And depending on which meaning he had in mind, different answers to the Temporal Question are supported.

I think that there are at least two reasons for thinking that Aquinas meant "after the incarnation" to mean "after the first moment of the incarnation." First, there are textual reasons from the same article. He addresses objections the premises of which entail multiple simultaneous incarnations. One example is the Second Objection in the article, where the objector claims that were the Word to have assumed two human natures, we couldn't call him a single man, since he would have more than one human nature; but we couldn't call him multiple men, either, since multiple men are multiplied by being multiple supposits (hypostases), and the Word is but one supposit. If Aquinas intended to preclude simultaneous incarnations, he could have easily answered the objection by noting that there could never be a time at which the one Word has two human natures, and so at every time we could call him at most a single man (supposing that he has assumed a human nature at that time). But instead of taking this easy route, Aquinas replies in another way, leaving untouched the premise that Christ could have two human natures simultaneously. This provides some evidence that he was not precluding multiple simultaneous incarnations with his modifier "after the incarnation."

A second reason, quite strong in my mind, is as follows. For Aquinas, the incarnation does not come to an end (see, for instance, *ST* III q.50 a.2 resp.). Thus, any later assumption of a rational nature by the Second Person would be an assumption that overlaps with the earlier assumption.[14]

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[14] The permanence of the incarnation will be an important aspect of the discussion of Christ's descent into hell, in Chapter 4, Section IV.a. Hebblethwaite (2001, 329) makes a similar point in discussing the dissimilarity between incarnation and reincarnation.

Though the argumentation Aquinas provides is put in terms of the Son assuming multiple created natures, we should note that another argument, employing Premise 14, could easily be constructed to show that the Father and Holy Spirit could do likewise:

14. If one divine person can do x, then the other two can do x as well.
20. The Son can become incarnate in multiple created natures, even simultaneously.
21. Thus, the Father and Holy Spirit can become   (From 14, 20.)
    incarnate in multiple created natures, even
    simultaneously.

I think that the quotation that started this section, coupled with the two reasons given for my reading of it, and the argument constructed from 14, 20, and 21, give evidence for thinking that Aquinas held the following view:

The Thomistic   It is possible for each divine person to assume
Temporal Answer: multiple created natures, even simultaneously.

III.d. The Thomistic Answer to the Sharing Question

Concerning the Sharing Question, Aquinas provides an explicit discussion of this question in an article entitled, "Whether several divine persons can assume one and the same individual nature." There he writes:

> The Incarnate Person subsists in two natures. But the three Persons can subsist in one Divine Nature. Therefore they can also subsist in one human nature in such a way that the human nature be assumed by the three Persons.
>
> (*ST* III q.3 a.6 sed contra)

The argument might be put as follows:

22. The three divine persons subsist in one and the same divine nature.
23. If the three divine persons subsist in one and the same divine nature, then they can subsist in one and the same human nature.
24. The three divine persons can subsist in one and the   (From 22, 23.)
    same human nature.
25. If the three divine persons can subsist in one and the same human nature, then the three divine persons can assume one and the same human nature.
26. Thus, the three divine persons can assume one and   (From 24, 25.)
    the same human nature.

Premise 22 is a staple of Christian orthodoxy. Aquinas does not support Premise 23 in this text, though one might interpret it as an argument from analogy. The divine nature case is relevantly analogous to the human nature case. Now in the divine nature case, three divine persons can subsist in the one divine nature. So, likewise, in the human case, three divine persons can subsist in the one human nature. Aquinas states the support for Step 24 differently in the *respondeo*. There he claims that the divine persons do not exclude one another from sharing a nature. We can tell this from the case of the Trinity. So, the divine persons do not exclude one another from sharing a single human nature, either. Premise 25 is unstated, but it is intuitive. The means by which a divine person comes to subsist in a human nature is via assumption. And so, were it possible that the three divine persons could subsist in one individual human nature, they would have to be able to assume that same human nature, as the argument concludes they can.[15]

One might wonder whether the claim is meant to be that all three divine persons could assume the same nature in the same world at the same time, or, more weakly, that at least one created nature is such that each divine person could assume it, but not in the same world, or at the same time. Perhaps CHN is such that each divine person *could* assume it, though there is no possible scenario in which more than one divine person *does* assume it, or no possible scenario in which more than one divine person assumes it *at the same time*.

I think the form of argumentation Aquinas offers shows that he means the stronger, simultaneous, reading of the sharing. For the analogy between the divine nature case and the human nature case relies upon similarity between the cases. But were the human case to be a case wherein the three persons are not subsisting in the nature simultaneously, the divine case, where the three persons *are* subsisting in the nature simultaneously, would be dissimilar. And so, I take this text to be evidence that Aquinas supported the following answer to the Sharing Question:

The Thomistic Sharing Answer:	It is possible for each divine person to assume one and the same human nature, even simultaneously.

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[15] Richard Cross draws up the medieval battle lines on the question of whether or not an individual nature can be shared by multiple divine persons. According to Cross (2005, 232–5), Anselm and Bonaventure argue that it is not possible for more than one divine person to assume the same human nature. On the opposing side, Aquinas, Henry of Ghent, and William of Ware claim that it is possible for more than one divine person to assume the same human nature. Scotus, claims Cross, has the tools required to side with Aquinas, Henry, and William, though he in fact sides with Anselm and Bonaventure. Marilyn Adams (Adams and Cross 2005a, 42–3) claims that Scotus agrees with Aquinas that each person could have become incarnate. As to the question of whether each person could simultaneously assume the same human nature, she claims that he answers, in a typical medieval way, "yes" in one sense, "no" in another.

IV. THE FULL THOMISTIC PICTURE

In this section, I briefly present a full Thomistic picture of multiple incarnations. I then sketch out how the metaphysics of such a scenario, were it actual, would look.

IV.a. The Full Thomistic Picture Presented

Given the argumentation of Section III, it is clear that Aquinas's views entail that the following is possible: There could be three simultaneously existing concrete human natures, each of which is assumed by all three of the divine persons at the same time. Here's why. The Thomistic answers to the Personal Question and the Sharing Question allow for there to be one concrete human nature shared by all three persons. And the answer to the Temporal Question allows for there to be multiple concrete human natures assumed by any one of the divine persons. I see no reason to think that Aquinas would allow one human nature to be assumed by all three but disallow a second nature to be assumed by all three. In fact, were he to claim that, say, the Son could assume both the shared nature and also the unshared nature, but the Father could not assume the second, unshared nature, then he would be violating Premise 14, that if one divine person can do *x*, then the other two can do *x* as well. Thus, there seems to be good reason to think that the Thomistic view of the possibility of multiple incarnations is as follows:

> *Thomistic Multiple Incarnations*:   There could be three simultaneously existing concrete rational natures, each of which is assumed by all three of the divine persons, at the same time.

One might balk at this point: such a bizarre scenario might be *possible* for an omnipotent God, but why would God ever want to do something like *that*?

To this question, I plead total ignorance. I do not know why God would want to do something like that. Maybe there are three planets whose personal inhabitants have revocably fallen and have rational natures. And perhaps the best time for an incarnation in each world coincides. In such a situation we can make sense of three simultaneous incarnations. But why all three persons incarnate in each nature? Perhaps there is something about love that can be best witnessed for creatures of those types by multi-personal incarnation. Maybe the creatures have three heads. Again, I have *no idea* why God would want to do this. But the important point to note is that Aquinas is not considering the divine motivations for action; he is considering the limits of divine power. And, really, is it so surprising for there to be some power which

the divine persons have such that I, with my finite intellect, cannot comprehend why they would employ it? My answer to this question is a firm "no."

IV.b. The Full Thomistic Picture Ontologically Sketched

In a previous book, I represented the incarnation as in Fig. 2.1.

The black dot on the left symbolizes the divine nature and the circle on the right represents the human nature of Christ, CHN. Conciliar Christology teaches that the human nature of Christ was composed of a body animated by a rational soul. That circle is divided in half horizontally. The lower half represents whatever counts as the matter (or body, or flesh) in the incarnation. (The "3" in the bottom half of the circle merely indicates that it wasn't the same matter that I referred to previously as matter-1 or matter-2 in that book.) The top half of the circle represents whatever counts as the soul of Christ's human nature. The "pins" in the pincushion represent property-role fulfillers—those things in virtue of which the human nature is rightly said to be particular, contingent ways— whatever they may be. For instance, when Christ is crucified, he has a cruciform posture, which he didn't have previously. However one understands that bit of reality in virtue of which it becomes true to say of him that he is cruciform—be it a platonic form, an inhering accident, an instantiated universal, etc.—that is what the pins in the pincushion represent. Finally, the line with an "×" through it represents the hypostatic union. The bracket does no ontological work. It merely points out that when we say the name "Jesus Christ" it is that whole thing we are referring to, the one person in two natures.[16]
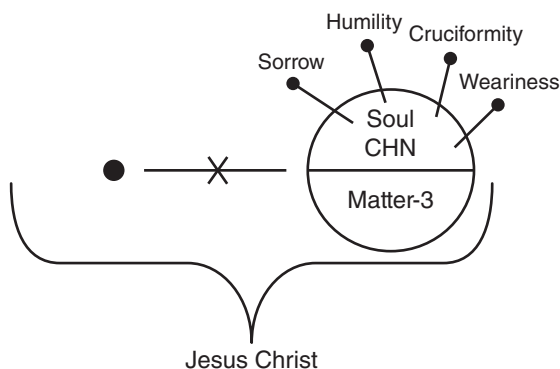
Fig. 2.1 A representation of the hypostatic union including accidents

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[16] When saying "whole" in this sentence, I do not mean that the natures are *parts* of the person, in the mereological sense of "part" used by contemporary analytic philosophers. While some early authors refer to the components as parts, more recent authors refer to them as

I find it useful to have a metaphysics to refer to in the exposition of the views. In the ontology I am assuming for this project, the pins are accidents inhering in Christ's human nature. And that human nature is composed of substantial form and a parcel of matter (I am non-committal about whether the matter is prime matter). These are assumptions for ease of exposition, and not substantive assumptions upon which I will rest any defense of Extended Conciliar Christology.

To represent Thomistic Multiple Incarnations, I will need to represent more than one human nature. I will represent these human natures as in Fig. 2.2.

In this figure, "HN1," "HN2," and "HN3," name the three human natures; "S1," "S2," and "S3" name the souls of those natures; and "M1," "M2," and "M3" name the parcels of matter (the "flesh") of those natures. I have represented four types of properties, A, B, C, and D, where each nature has an A property, B is had by HN1 alone, C is had by HN2 alone, and D is had by HN3 alone. One might be skeptical of the existence of negative properties, such as the property of not-being-seated. In light of that, I will not be requiring the reader to understand, say, the "~C" of HN1 to be a negative property. Rather, understand it as some property the inherence of which is inconsistent with inherence of C in that same nature (this will be an important point in Chapter 3, Section II). For instance, if "C" is standing, let "~C" represent sitting, or lying down, or swimming, or some such property. Similar things could be said for ~B and ~D.

The pictorial representation of the hypostatic relations will need to be augmented as well, for there will be nine hypostatic unions in an actual case of Thomistic Multiple Incarnations. I will represent them with names, such as "UF1," which means "hypostatic *u*nion uniting the divine nature and HN*1* in the *F*ather," and "UH3," which means "hypostatic *u*nion uniting the divine nature and HN*3* in the *H*oly Spirit."
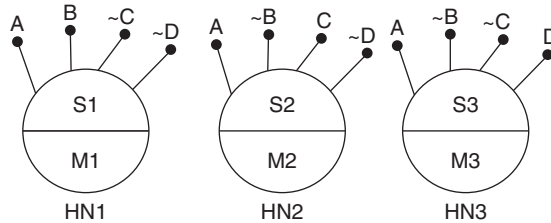
Fig. 2.2 A representation of multiple human natures

"quasi-parts" precisely because the relation between them and the person of Christ is not one of literal part to whole. See, for instance, Fr Pohle (1913, 146). Thomas Flint (2012, 190) does similarly, saying that the components are "something rather like a part."
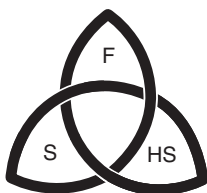
Fig. 2.3 A traditional Trinity symbol

The pictorial representation of the divine nature will remain the same, though slightly enlarged for ease of representation. I considered the idea of making the representation a Trinity symbol as in Fig. 2.3, where the hypostatic relations would hold between the points of the Trinity symbol and the three human natures.

I realized, however, that such a picture would give the impression that the individual persons are the things hypostatically united to the human natures.[17] And that impression is not correct, for the person is not a thing united to the nature. The relata of the hypostatic union are the two natures in question.[18] The whole, again, if one can speak in such terms, is the person.[19]

The whole picture, then, looks something like Fig. 2.4, which admittedly and unfortunately brings to mind Masonic imagery and best-selling author, Dan Brown.

The hypostatic unions that bind natures together in the unity of the person of the Father are shown on the left of each set of three; the unions that bind natures together in the unity of the person of the Son are shown in the middle; the unions that bind natures together in the unity of the person of the Holy Spirit are shown on the right. The union is between natures in a person, and so the apparent conclusion of any union in a property is an artefact of the representation and not intentional. US1, for instance, is a hypostatic union that takes the divine nature and HN1 as relata; it does not terminate in the property, B. Here I do not mean to imply that the only relations or unions in the incarnation are hypostatic unions, or that assumed natures are not, in some

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[17] I thank Andrew Jones for helping me see the impression given, and the need to avoid such an impression.

[18] For St Thomas, the union is itself a created thing. See *ST* III q.2 a.7.

[19] The language of parts and wholes is misleading. For "part" is properly used of something that stands in a mereological relationship. And the hypostatic union is not, on my understanding, a mereological relationship (see Pawl (2016e, chap. 1, sect. V) for more on the nature of the hypostatic union). Likewise, "whole" is also used primarily for the thing (mereologically) composed of parts. So both terms are ill-suited for this use. However, there is an analogous sense in which they are the best-suited terms we have. For we don't have standard terms for the relata in a hypostatic union, other than "nature" and "person." And the hypostatic union does have some similarities to the parthood relation. For instance, parts compose wholes, and there is a sense in which that is the closest analog to the relation the natures play to the person in the hypostatic union.
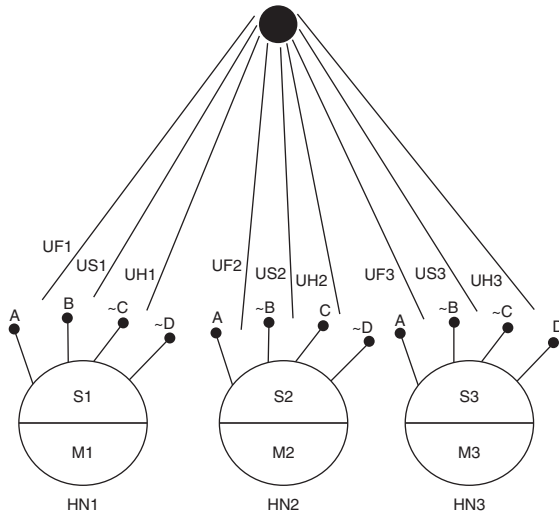
Fig. 2.4 A representation of the Thomistic Multiple Incarnations

way, united to the persons who assume them. Aquinas, for instance, claims that the Father unites the human nature *to the Son*.[20] That said, the main sort of union discussed in the conciliar statements is *hypostatic union*, which holds *in* a person, and between the divine and human natures (or between the divine nature and the *parts* of the human nature, see Chapter 4, Section V.b).

How does the representation I give above in Fig. 2.4 explain the difference between, say, US1 and UF1? For don't both those relations have the same relata standing in the same relation? Don't they both say that the divine nature is united to HN1 in the relation of hypostatic union? Logically, wouldn't we present them as a two-place relation, letting "HU" mean "hypostatic union" and letting x be the thing united to y: HU(x,y)? In such a case, US1 and UF1 would be expressed HU(DN,HN1). How can they be distinct, then?[21]

In reply, when expressed logically, the relation should have three relata: the natures united, *and* the person in whom they are united. The relation is better expressed as "HU(P,x,y)," where "P" names the person. So US1 and UF1 would be expressed, respectively: HU(S,DN,HN1) and HU(F,DN,HN1). As such, the logical representation of the hypostatic unions does allow distinction between the diverse unions, even if they do hold between the same two natures.

The question to ask at this point is the following: Is Thomistic Multiple Incarnations inconsistent with Conciliar Christology? Were there to be multiple simultaneous incarnations as represented above, would such a state of affairs, along with the truth of Conciliar Christology, entail any incoherence or inconsistency? I turn to these questions in Chapter 3.

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[20] See *ST* III q.2 a.8 ad.2. I thank a referee for this reference, and for pointing out my need to acknowledge more types of unions in play than my pictorial representation shows.
[21] I thank a referee for raising this question.

V. CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have differentiated between multiple ways of understanding the claim that multiple incarnations are possible. I differentiated four questions one might ask when considering whether multiple incarnations are possible:

The Natural Question:	What is required on the part of the assumed nature for incarnation?
The Personal Question:	Which divine persons can become incarnate?
The Temporal Question:	What are the requirements concerning the timing of incarnations?
The Sharing Question:	Could multiple divine persons become incarnate in the same nature?

I then provided Thomistic answers to these four questions:

The Thomistic Natural Answer:	What is required on the part of a nature for assumption is that it have the appropriate dignity (e.g., rationality) and that it be possibly restorable to union with God.
The Thomistic Personal Answer:	Each divine person could become incarnate.
The Thomistic Temporal Answer:	It is possible for each divine person to assume multiple created natures, even simultaneously.
The Thomistic Sharing Answer:	It is possible for each divine person to assume one and the same human nature, even simultaneously.

Finally, I provided a statement of the strong version of belief in multiple incarnations to which I think Aquinas is committed. That thesis is:

Thomistic Multiple Incarnations:	There could be three simultaneously existing concrete rational natures, each of which is assumed by all three of the divine persons, at the same time.

In this chapter, I have not argued that Thomistic Multiple Incarnations is consistent or coherent. Rather, I have disambiguated questions of multiplicity in incarnation and provided one robust answer to those questions. In Chapter 3 I consider philosophical objections to multiple incarnations, understood in the strong Thomistic sense. I argue that the objections all fail.

3

Objections to the Possibility
of Multiple Incarnations

I. INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2 I presented Thomas Aquinas's view of the possibility of multiple incarnations. There I claimed that he affirmed an extremely strong view of the possibility of multiple incarnations, which I labeled Thomistic Multiple Incarnations:

> *Thomistic Multiple Incarnations*: There could be three simultaneously existing concrete rational natures, each of which is assumed by all three of the divine persons, at the same time.

In this chapter I will not argue for the truth of Thomistic Multiple Incarnations. Rather, I will consider philosophical objections to the view or its components, or objections to the view, when it is conjoined as an extension onto Conciliar Christology.

The strong view of multiple incarnations I consider, while defended by such luminaries as Thomas Aquinas, has fallen on hard times. As Kenneth Baker writes:

> Most contemporary dogmatic theologians would hold that only the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Son of God, could become man.
>
> (Baker 1983, 233–4)

Later in this chapter, in Section VIII, I will discuss the reasoning he gives in favor of this claim.

In this chapter I consider and respond to seven objections to the conjunction of Thomistic Multiple Incarnations and Conciliar Christology. They are as follows.

II. THE OBJECTION FROM INCOMPATIBLE PREDICATIONS

In this section I will first present the objection. Then I will go on to discuss responses to it. The first objection is a resurrection of an old enemy, the objection to the incarnation from incompatible predications, sometimes referred to as the Fundamental Problem, or the Fundamental Philosophical Problem. That objection to the incarnation (without consideration of multiple incarnations) might be put as follows. How can one and the same person be both God and man, since being God requires having some predicates apt of the thing which no man can have apt of him, and being man likewise requires some predicates apt of the thing that cannot be apt of God.[1]

   This sort of objection has more teeth, given the truth of Thomistic Multiple Incarnations. In fact, the objection has more teeth on a much weaker understanding of multiple incarnations as well: provided that it is logically possible for any divine person to assume two natures simultaneously, this objection arises. Since the Thomistic Multiple Incarnations view entails that each divine person can assume two natures simultaneously, it must face this objection.

II.a.. A Statement of the Objection

To see the force of the objection, consider a situation in which a divine person, say, the Son, has assumed an additional human nature and so is incarnate in two distinct natures at the same time. As we have seen previously (Chapter 1, Section III), it is true to say, on Conciliar Christology, that God suffered, died, and was buried because of what happened to Christ in his assumed human nature. Now consider what we would have to say about a Son who has assumed *two* natures.

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[1] For other discussions of this objection, see: Marilyn Adams (2006, 121–3, 2009, 242–3), James Arcadi (2018), J. P. Arendzen (1941, 279–82), Alan Bäck (1998, 84, 2008), T. W. Bartel (1995, 155), Don Cupitt (1977, 136), Stephen Davis (2006, 116), Samuel Dawson (2004, 161–2), C. Stephen Evans (2006, 13), Ronald Feenstra (2006, 142–4), Francis Ferrier (1962, 99), Norman Geisler and William Watkins (1985), James Gordon (2016, 64), Michael Gorman (2000a, 2011, 2014, 2016, 2017, chap. 6), Francis Joseph Hall (1898, chap. 3, section 5; chap. 8), Brian Hebblethwaite (2008, 60), John Hick (1989, 415, 2006, 66–70), Jonathan Hill (2012, 3), Charles Kelly (1994), Gyula Klima (1984), John Knox (1967, 36), Brian Leftow (2011a, 316), Andrew Loke (2009, 51, 2011, 493–4), Macquarrie (1990), J. P. Moreland and William Lane Craig (2003, 597), Thomas Morris (1987, chap. 1, 2009), James Moulder (1986, 288–90), Wolfhart Pannenberg (1968, 296–7), Timothy Pawl (2014a, 2015, 2016c, 2016e, chaps 4–7), T. E. Pollard (1955, 356–7), Aaron Riches (2016, 5, 166), Thomas Senor (2002, 221), Alan Spence (2008, 16), Eleonore Stump (1989, 2004, 2005, chap. 14), Richard Sturch (1991, chaps 2, 12), William Vallicella (2002), Peter van Inwagen (1998, sects 2–4), Bruce Ware (2013, 16), Stephen Wellum (2016, 446–55), and Frank Weston (1914, 181).

In a case of one divine person assuming two distinct natures, the predicates apt in virtue of both natures would be apt of the one divine person, in virtue of the hypostatic union. Thus, not only would the Son be, say, passible and impassible. The Son would also be, say, sitting and standing, or sleeping and awake, or having a mass of N and having a mass of M (where N and M are not the same), etc. In short, not only would we have difficult pairs that are conjunctions of divine and human predicates, we would have difficult pairs that are conjunctions solely of human predicates. While it is not easy, it is much easier to make sense of the compatibility of an objectionable pair composed of one divine and one human predicate than it is to make sense of a pair composed of two human predicates. Can some person really be sitting, awake, and talking at the very same time he is lying down, asleep, and silent? Isn't that a blatant, odious, awful contradiction?

To see an example of the difficulty I have in mind, consider again Figure 2.2 from Chapter 2, Section IV.b, where I diagrammed three human natures. Let "B" be a predicate that is apt of the person in virtue of how HN1 is (say, "suffering" or "weary" or "weeping" or "sitting," etc.). HN1 fulfills the truth conditions required for the predicate, "B," to be apt of its supposit. HN2, on the other hand, does not fulfill the conditions required for the predicate, "B," to be apt of its supposit; rather, it fulfills some conditions in virtue of which "~B" is apt of the supposit.[2] Thus we must say, first, that the Second Person is B, since HN1 fulfills the truth conditions for its supposit to be B. But also, by parallel reasoning, we must say that the Second Person is not B. Thus, we arrive at a contradiction: One and the same person is both B and not B at the same time. Hence, the conjunction of Thomistic Multiple Incarnations and Conciliar Christology is false.

II.b.. Responses to the Objection

In this subsection I will discuss three responses to the Objection from Incompatible Predications, modeled on the responses to the Fundamental Problem that I canvassed in chapters 5–7 of *In Defense of Conciliar Christology*.

II.b.1. The Reply from Denying the Predications

Consider the responses to the Fundamental Problem that deny one or the other of the relevant predicates of Christ, either full stop, or for certain times,

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[2] By "its supposit" here I do not mean a supposit which the nature "has," say, as a part or member. For, as we saw in the discussion of the definition of supposits in Section IV.a of Chapter 1, no supposit can be had by another thing in that sense. Rather, I mean the supposit which has the nature, in whatever sense of "has" a supposit has a nature.

such that both predicates are not apt of Christ at any one time.³ For instance, on such a response, Christ, when incarnate, is not both passible and impassible, but rather simply passible. As such, both predicates are not apt of him at the same time to cause the contradiction. Kenotic Christology, on which Christ emptied himself of his divine attributes during his time being incarnate—or emptied himself of the divine attributes that are incompatible with being human—is one such view.⁴

Such a response will not work for the multiple simultaneous incarnations case. For incarnation requires the transfer of predicates, and so the predicates of both simultaneously assumed natures will transfer to the divine person. There is no principled way to say, for instance, that the predicates associated with HN1 transfer, but those of HN2 do not. HN1 and HN2 bear the same relation of assumption to the divine person, and it is that relation which undergirds the communication of idioms. So long as one nature can sit while the other stands, or talk while the other remains silent, then there are some apparently incompatible predicates that will transfer to the divine person.⁵

In the preceding paragraph, I concluded that so long as the natures can behave differently than one another, apparently contradictory predicates will be apt of one and the same divine person in a case of simultaneous incarnations. One response, then, would be to deny that two assumed natures could act differently from one another. Perhaps one could argue that both natures must be in sync, in some sense, similar to Leibnizian pre-established harmony. For any natures, x and y, assumed by a divine person, and any transferable predicate, P, x is P if and only if y is P. Perhaps all cases where one divine person assumes two natures are cases where one nature laughs if and only if the other does; one nature sleeps if and only if the other does, etc. Such a

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³ This is the work of chap. 5 of Pawl (2016e).

⁴ For more on Kenotic Christology, its history is given in brief by Stephen Davis (2011, 114–15), C. Stephen Evans (2006, 3–5), and Thomas Senor (2011, 102–3) and in much greater depth by Thomas Thompson (2006). For expositions or in-depth discussion of Kenotic Christology, see Brown (2011), Crisp (2007c, chap. 5), Cupitt (1979, 136–7), Davis (1983, chap. 8, 1988, 52, 2006, 2011), Evans (2006), Feenstra (2006, 142), Forrest (2009), Hall (1898), Morris (1987, 89–102), Pawl (2016e, chap. 5), Senor (2011), Sturch (1991, 252–60), Van Inwagen (1998, sect. 3), and Weinandy (1985, chap. 4).

⁵ Here I predicate "sitting" of a nature. I refer the reader to Chapter 1, Section IV.b for justification on the practice of using such predicates of concrete natures. If the reader finds such a practice inexcusable, the reader may paraphrase away such statements. In fact, I've already offered such a paraphrase above, in Section II.a, where I wrote, rather than the simpler "HN1 has B," the more complex, "HN1 fulfills the truth conditions required for the predicate, 'B,' to be apt of its suppositum." This example shows, I think, one way that a reader allergic to predicating physical, volitional, and intellectual predicates of the assumed human nature can apply them instead to the suppositum in question. The proponent of the wording of the conciliar texts will no doubt apply the predicates to the suppositum, too. But he will, in addition, apply them to the human nature, as the councils did before him.

situation would be quite peculiar, but we shouldn't rule it out for that reason: recall the already peculiar context of consideration!

I think that this response, which we might call the response from pre-established harmony, will not work as a response to this objection. For there are some predicates that it appears that two natures cannot share. For instance, consider the predicate, "exactly filling region R." That is not a predicate we use very often. But we can construct such a predicate. And when we do, we see that, unless the two natures entirely overlap one another, they cannot both have that predicate apt of them.[6] Likewise for other things we can predicate of the natures (e.g., their birth stories, for instance, will be different). Thus, even if there were a pre-established harmony in the activities of the two simultaneously assumed natures, it would be false that all predicates apt of them would be the same. And some of the differing predicates will be apparently contradictory, such as predicates concerning birth stories and regions of space filled. This Reply from Denying the Predications, even when strengthened by the addition of the assumption of pre-established harmony of assumed natures, does not sufficiently answer the Objection from Incompatible Predications.

II.b.2. The Reply from Qua-Modifying the Predications

Consider the responses to the Fundamental Problem that employ "qua" responses to remove the alleged contradiction of predicates apt of the one God-man.[7] Put perhaps a bit over-simplistically, they agree on the following dialectical move. They affirm that Christ is both, say, impassible and passible, but they say that he wasn't both "in the same way," for Christ was passible qua man, and impassible qua God. For instance, the Third Council of Constantinople claims the following concerning Christ's nativities:

> begotten before the ages from the Father as regards his divinity, and in the last days the same for us and for our salvation from the holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, who is properly and truly called the mother of God, as regards his humanity.   (Tanner 1990, 127)

It is according to, or regarding, or qua his divinity (his divine nature) that he was begotten before the ages; it was according to, or regarding, or qua his humanity (his human nature) that he was begotten from the virgin Mary.

There are many ways one might understand such "qua" modifications to the offending predications. One might read the qua as modifying the

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[6] Might issues in Relativity theory be pertinent here? Would referring to a reference frame help? If so, insert it. If not, consider this claim: my cell phone and your cell phone can't be in the exact same place at the same time. That is true, if they are distinct phones. We'll have to gussy up the way I've put it to make it scientifically respectable. But let it be so gussied. Now take that method of gussification and apply it to the case of the two natures HN1 and HN2.

[7] This is the work of chap. 6 of Pawl (2016e).

whole assertion, e.g., "Qua divine, Christ is immutable." Or one might read it as modifying the subject of the predication, e.g., "Christ-qua-human is changeable." Or one might read it as modifying the predicate which is said of the subject in the proposition, e.g., "Christ is temporal-qua-human." Finally, one might read it as modifying the copula which binds subject to predicate in the assertion, e.g., "Christ is-qua-divine eternal." Moreover, there are subdivisions among these forms of division. I've elsewhere called the method of modifying the assertion the (A) strategy, of modifying the subject the (S) strategy, of modifying the predicate the (P) strategy, and of modifying the copula the (C) strategy.[8] How do these strategies fare in solving the Objection from Incompatible Predications to the possibility of simultaneous incarnations of the same divine person?[9]

Consider the first response, the (A) response, which modifies the whole assertion. Let "B" in the example given in Section II.a refer to the predicate, "sitting," let "~B" refer to "standing," and suppose that these two predicates are incompatible if said of the same thing at the same time in the same way. The (A) response, then would add qua-modifiers to the whole assertion in the hopes of evading the charge of contradiction. The (A) response works by adding some explanation for the truth of the statement. An example would be adding "qua faculty member" to modify the assertion, "Pawl has an office at the University of St Thomas." The modified propositions in the Christology case would then be: "qua HN1, the Son is sitting"; "qua HN2, the Son is standing." How do these fare?[10]

To my mind, this response fails. We can see why by seeing two things that are true, on the (A) response. First, the (A) theory assumes the incompatibility of the predicates—otherwise, the (A) theory would not be needed. If the predicates weren't thought to be incompatible, we wouldn't need to add "qua" locutions to resolve the problem. Second, the (A) move allows for the *secundum quid ad simpliciter* inference—the inference from "Qua N, x is F" to "x is F." It allows for this inference form because, on the (A) theory, the "qua" locution merely adds explanation. But if "x is F because of N" is true, then "x is F" is true. These two things together spell disaster for the (A) method of response to this problem. For by the *secundum quid ad simpliciter* inference, we can derive that (to continue our example from above) the Son is sitting and the Son is standing. And by the incompatibility assumption, these two

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[8] To see more on these means of qua-modifying, see (Pawl 2016c, 2016e, chap. 6).

[9] For some discussion of how qua solutions fare in answering the Fundamental Problem, see Adams (2009, 253–60), de Aldama and Solano (2014, 214–15), Bäck (1997, 1998), Bohn (2012), Herbert (1979, chap. 4), Holland (2012, 174), Klima (1984), Morris (1987, 48–9), Pawl (2016c, 2016e, chap. 6), Senor (2002, 229–33), Swinburne (1994, 197–9), van Inwagen (1998, sect. 4).

[10] For discussion of how the (A) response fares against the Fundamental Problem, see Adams (2009, 254–5), Bäck (1998, 84–7), Cross (2005, 193–5, 2011, 455–6), Morris (1987, 48–9), and Senor (2002, 229).

predicates are incompatible in one thing. We thus arrive at one object, the divine person, having incompatible predicates apt of him at the same time.[11] And that can't be. Thus, the (A) theory fails to answer this objection.

Consider the second response, the (S) response. This response treats the "qua" clause as modifying the subject alone, and so the predications in question would be: "the Son-qua-HN1 is sitting"; "the Son-qua-HN2 is standing." Since we have two different subjects of predication, we do not have two predications that say *of one and the same thing* two incompatible predicates.[12] As such, the contradiction is avoided. What should we think of this response?

To my mind, this response also fails. Either the term "the Son-qua-HN1" names the same person as "the Son-qua-HN2" or it does not. If both "the Son-qua-HN1" and "the Son-qua-HN2" name the person, Jesus Christ, then that person ends up being both sitting and standing again on this view, which is precisely what this move was an attempt to avoid. Thus, the proponent of this response must claim that those terms do not name the same person.

What do the terms "the Son-qua-HN1" and "the Son-qua-HN2" name, then, if not the person? Perhaps the individual assumed natures. For instance, perhaps "the Son-qua-HN1" names the assumed nature, HN1, but not the person. If the terms name the different natures, then, when we say that "the Son-qua-HN1 is sitting," we are saying that HN1 is sitting. But these predicates transfer from the nature to the person whose nature it is, and so it would be true that "the Son is sitting." Now, the same reasoning holds for HN2: "The Son-qua-HN2" names HN2; "The Son-qua-HN2 is standing" is true; thus, "HN2 is standing" is true. It follows that the Son is standing, and we again get incompatible predicates apt of the same thing at the same time.

This same style of reasoning is used in the councils to infer that the Second Person of the Trinity hung on the cross and bled, because his assumed human nature did these things. What goes for hanging and bleeding goes for sitting and standing (or, if you think it does not, just use the examples of hanging and not hanging, or bleeding and not bleeding, rather than sitting and standing). So, given the claims that one nature is sitting and the other standing, we again derive that the one divine person is both sitting and standing. But the whole reason to posit qua-modifications as a response to the argument is to get around having to say that one and the same thing is both sitting and standing at the same time. So, this response does not do what it was intended to do.

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[11] For more on the *secundum quid ad simpliciter* inference, see Bäck (1998, 85), Klima (1984, 212–16).

[12] For discussion of how the (S) response fares against the Fundamental Problem, see Adams (2009, 255–6), Bäck (1998, 86), Bartel (1995, 158), Cross (2005, 195–9, 2011, 456), Senor (2002, 229–30), and Sturch (1991, 152).

Whether "the Son-qua-HN1" names the Son or names HN1, in neither case do we avoid a contradiction, supposing that "standing" and "sitting" are incompatible predicates to say of the same thing at the same time.

Consider now the predicate (P) and copula (C) theories.[13] These divide into Substitutional and Non-Substitutional theories. Recall that the (P) theory understands the qua-clause to modify the predicate of the predication.[14] When we say that, qua divine, Christ is impassible, what we really mean is that the person, Christ, bears a modified predicate, impassible-qua-divine. There are two ways to understand that qua-modification.

The Non-Substitutional (P) theory says that the modifier added to the predicate is static. For instance, there's one predicate, sitting-qua-man, and another distinct predicate, sitting-qua-beagle. The Substitutional (P) theory says, on the other hand, that the nature term in the "qua-nature" modifier is a variable, for which we can substitute in different natures. For the substitutional (P) view, there is one "X sits-qua-N" relation, which a thing x, bears to a nature, N. We can take this one relation and insert in different natures to get different instances of that relation. The difference between the Substitutional and Non-Substitutional Predicate views, then, is whether we proliferate one-place predicates, which have a nature type built into them, or whether we understand the predicates as really being two-place relations.

Recall that the (C) theory understands the qua-clause to modify the copula of the predication. When we say that, qua divine, Christ is impassible, what we really mean is that the person, Christ, bears a certain relation to the unmodified predicate, impassible: he *is-divinely* impassible. There are two ways to understand that qua-modification.

On the Non-Substitutional (C) theory, copulas come tacitly modified in a certain way; for instance, is-qua-man, or is-qua-beagle. These two copulas are distinct, and there's nothing there in the copula into which you could substitute a different term. There's just the human copula, and the beagle copula, and the etc. . . . The Substitutional (C) theory, on the other hand, posits a single copula, which has a variable within it, into which one can substitute different nature terms. The copula is "is-qua-N," and we can substitute in different natures for N when we use that one and only copula. Since the responses to the (P)- and (C)-Substitutional theories and (P)- and (C)-Non-Substitutional theories are analogous, I will treat them in tandem in what follows.

Neither the Non-Substitutional (P) or (C) theory guards against the Objection of Incompatible Predicates to cases of simultaneous multiple incarnations of a single divine person. Suppose, for sake of illustration, that we qua-modify

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[13] For more on these, see Pawl (2016e, chap. 6, sects V and VI).
[14] For some discussion of this understanding of qua-clauses in relation to Christology, see Adams (2009, 253–60), Bäck (1998), Cross (2005, 204–5, 2011, 457), and Senor (2002, 230–3).

the predicates in a Non-Substitutional way. In virtue of HN1, it is true of the divine person that "he is sitting-qua-human"; in virtue of HN2, it is true of the divine person that "he is standing-qua-human." These two predicates do not remove the incompatibility. We started off this discussion with the assumption that sitting and standing are incompatible for humans. This method of response works by claiming that it is not a predicate and an incompatible predicate both said of the same thing at the same time. In the Fundamental Problem, there are different sorts of natures at play, and so there is reason to think that the two natures might provide compatible predicates when qua-appended to the predicates: for instance, impassible-qua-divine and passible-qua-human. But if the very same nature type is used in both modified predications, as in the case where one divine person assumes two natures of the same type simultaneously, the contradiction does not so much as appear to be alleviated.

The Non-Substitutional (C) theory fares no better. For the "qua" modified copula is the same in both cases. Christ is-qua-human sitting, at the same time that he is-qua-human standing. It is precisely these sorts of contradictory situations that the Non-Substitutional (P) and (C) responses were posited to avoid in the typical incarnational problems.

There is a response available to the Non-Substitutional theorists that makes use of the insight that one can "qua" modify at different levels. For instance, instead of modifying the predicates with the general nature modifier, "human," which applies to Christ and also to you, what if we modified it to individual concrete natures. On the Non-Substitutional (P) theory, that would mean that all predicates apt of Christ in virtue of HN1 or HN2 are really modified as follows: "sits-as-HN1," "stands-as-HN2," etc. Likewise, for the Non-Substitutional (C) theory, the copulas are all modified right down to the concrete nature of Christ: "Christ is-HN1ly sitting"; "Christ is-HN2ly standing."

So, for instance, when HN1 sits, we say that the Son is sitting, and we mean, on the Non-Substitutional (P) view, that "the Son is sitting-qua-HN1." Or we mean (on the (C) view) that "the Son is-qua-HN1 sitting." Since no other predication of the Son in virtue of another, simultaneous incarnation of the Son would include the HN1—since it would be an assumption of some other concrete human nature, HN2—the Non-Substitutional (P) theorist would have a way to block the incompatible predications. The Son is never, say, sitting-qua-HN1 and standing-qua-HN1; though he might be sitting-qua-HN1 and standing-qua-HN2. Such a state, says the Non-Substitutional (P) theorist, is not inconsistent. Similar reasoning would show that the Son would never be sitting HN1ly and standing HN1ly, though he might be sitting HN1ly and standing HN2ly. Thus, concludes the Non-Substitutional (P) or (C) theorist who qua-modifies at the level of concrete natures, the Objection from Incompatible Predicates is answered.

The problem with such a response in a Non-Substitutional (P) framework is that it renders no predicate univocal for use with two different subjects.[15] In this case of qua-modifying down to the concrete natures, *no predicate* is apt of both you and me. For any predicate apt of me, it is qua-modified to my concrete nature. But no predicate apt of you is qua-modified to my nature in the same way that predicates apt of me are. And so, there is no predication of the form "*x* is F" where both of us are apt substitution instances of the *x*. If the predicate is apt of me the F is indexed to my concrete nature; if it is apt of you the F is indexed to yours. Put succinctly, if the Non-Substitutional (P) theory is true, then predicates have a tacit modifier to a particular concrete nature built into them. If predicates have a tacit modifier to a particular concrete nature built into them, then, in non-incarnation cases, no predicate is apt of two distinct supposits.[16] But some predicates are apt of two distinct supposits. It is true, for instance, to say that you and I are both mammals, in the same sense of that term. Thus, the Non-Substitutional (P) theory is false. Likewise, for the Non-Substitutional (C) theory: if all copulas are indexed to concrete natures, there is no predication of the form "*x* is F" where both you and I are proper substitution instances of *x*. This is because, when said of you, what we are really saying is "you are-qua-your-concrete-nature F," and it is false that "I am-qua-your-concrete-nature F."

Do the Substitutional theories face the same problem? Recall that the Substitutional theories say that the "qua" modifier is variable. The nature relatum is substitutional, by which I mean that one can substitute in different natures or terms into that place. Suppose, again, that the Son is incarnate in two human natures at the same time: HN1 and HN2. And suppose that HN1 is sitting and HN2 is standing. For the Substitutional (P) theory, we might put the claims as follows, where "S" names the predicate "sitting" and "T" names the predicate "standing":

1. "The Son is sitting":   S(*s,hn1*)
2. "The Son is standing":   T(*s,hn2*)

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[15] For more on this objection, which I called the Objection from Uncommon Predicates, see Pawl (2016e, 133–5).

[16] Even in cases where one supposit has two natures, as in the actual incarnation case, this isn't a case where two supposits are aptly predicated by predicates apt in virtue of those natures. For in the actual incarnation case there is only one relevant supposit—the Word.

I add the "in non-incarnation cases" clause to the consequent of this sentence to avoid counterexamples. For instance, consider a case where both the Father and the Son assume a certain nature, say, HN3. In such a case, by the communication of idioms, when HN3 bleeds, it is true to say of both the Father and the Son that "he is bleeding-qua-HN3." But then predicates tacitly qua-modified to a particular concrete nature are true of multiple supposits in virtue of that nature's being shared by those supposits, which would be contrary to the sentence this footnote is appended to, if the sentence did not include the "in non-incarnation cases" clause.

We might go further and claim that, since the Son is standing-qua-HN2, it is not the case that the Son is sitting-qua-HN2. We could formulate this claim as follows:

3. "It is not the case that the Son is sitting": $\sim S(s,hn2)$

The inconsistency between 1 and 3 is only apparent. The Substitutional (P) theorist will deal with it in just the same way that he dealt with the claims "Christ is passible" and "Christ is impassible": He will claim that the two predications are not true in the same sense, since they are true in virtue of different natures. And so, this Substitutional (P) theory has a way of avoiding the Objection from Incompatible Predications while still granting the possibility of multiple, simultaneous incarnations of the same divine person.

Similar things can be said about the Substitutional (C) theory. The inconsistency in saying "the Son is-qua-HN1 sitting" and "it is not the case that the Son is-qua-HN2 sitting" is only apparent. The Substitutional (C) theorist will deal with it in just the same way that he dealt with the claims "Christ is passible" and "Christ is impassible": He will claim that the two predications are not true in the same sense, since they are true in virtue of different natures. And so, this Substitutional (C) theory has a way of avoiding the Objection from Incompatible Predications while still granting the possibility of multiple, simultaneous incarnations of the same divine person.

I think the Substitutional (P) and (C) "qua" theories provide adequate responses to the Objection from Incompatible Predications. That said, they do face some difficulties. For further discussion of these two theories, including twelve objections to them, see Pawl (2016e, chap. 6, sects V.b and VI.b).

II.b.3. *Denying the Incompatibility of the Predicates*

My preferred response to the Fundamental Problem (see chapter 7 of *In Defense of Conciliar Christology*) can be extended to deal with this objection. My preferred response is to understand the truth conditions for the pairs of allegedly inconsistent predicates to have a tacit "has a nature that is" preface. That is, rather than understanding the predication "*x* is passible" to have as its truth condition "*x* is causally affectable by other things," we can take "*x* is passible" to have as its truth condition "*x* has a nature that is causally affectable by other things." With such an understanding of the candidate pairs, we can note that the predicates "passible" and "impassible" could both be apt of one thing, provided that the one thing has at least two natures.

A worry might arise in the mind of a reader at this point.[17] The predicate "passible" is taken to mean that the thing in question has a nature that is

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[17] I thank a referee for raising this worry here.

causally affectable by other things. Consider Christ's assumed human nature. It itself is passible. But then it itself must have a nature that is causally affectable by other things. That nature, too, will be causally affectable—at the very least, God could cause it to exist or cease existing. It appears we are off on a regress, here, requiring natures for natures for natures for … This is a worry I dealt with in *In Defense of Conciliar Christology* (7.V. obj. 5.). We can understand the "has" in "has a nature" as including identity. That is, all natures count as "having" themselves. If we do so, we needn't postulate natures for natures to have. We stop the regress at the first nature.

We can apply this response to the Objection from Incompatible Predicates as well. Let the "B" in "The Word is B" mean "sitting," and let "~B" refer to some bodily state that a nature cannot have while sitting; say, lying down. Again, we can state intuitive and revised truth conditions for "The Word is sitting." We can take the original truth condition to be "The Word is shaped thus-and-so." (Giving a tidy and informative analysis of when the predicate "sitting" is apt of someone turns out to be quite difficult!) The revised truth condition, then, would be "the Word has a nature that is shaped thus-and-so." And again, provided that the Word has more than one assumed nature, it is possible for him to fulfill the conditions required to be both B and what I've called ~B.

In such a case, though, it is not true that what I've called "~B" is the complement of "B."[18] For it turns out to be false that they couldn't both be apt of something at the same time in the same way. Both "B" and "~B" would be apt of the same divine person at the same time, were that person to assume two natures, one of which is sitting and the other lying down. Are they true "in the same way"? Well, suppose Peter is sitting and Paul is lying down. In such a case, it is true that the Word is "sitting" in the same sense as Peter is: the term is used univocally in both cases. Likewise, for Paul and lying down. Neither Peter nor Paul could have both terms apt of him, since neither has more than one nature in virtue of which the predicates could be apt. If sameness of "sense" or "way" of predication requires merely univocal usage of the terms in both cases, then the Word is sitting and lying down in the same sense. But since the truth conditions for the terms are met for the Word in this case, and met without contradiction, we have found a way for the Objection from Incompatible Predicates to be avoided. The predicates, it turns out, are not

[18] One should not worry that I'm denying a truth of logic here, that both B and ~B (when understood as complementary predicates) cannot both be true of the same thing at the same time. Recall that I defined "~B" as a name for some bodily position, and not as a predicate true of something just in case "B" is false of it. Since it is the name of some bodily position, and not a term that means simply that the thing which has it lacks B, it is an open question whether or not both can be apt of the same thing. Were it defined as a complement from the start, this whole discussion would be moot. By definition, two complements cannot be apt of the same thing at the same time.

incompatible in *all* cases. In any case where one supposit has more than one nature, the predicates turn out to be compatible.

We should not underplay the implications of this response. It, in effect, requires that the truth conditions for predicates in our ordinary language— sitting; standing; sleeping; awake—are all tacitly modified with a "has a nature that" prefix. I discussed some objections to these implications at the end of chapter 7 of *In Defense of Conciliar Christology*. While such a theory requires a modification of our view of the truth conditions for some predicates, it does not require us to posit anything different in reality than we were previously positing. For we already believed in what the conciliar fathers meant by the term "nature"—we already thought that there were some instances of types of things. In the Christological setting, we already thought that there were flesh and blood composites of body and soul. And even if you didn't, if you are a proponent of Conciliar Christology who is, say, a substance dualist, or a materialist, you still had some way of interpreting and paraphrasing the claims of the councils when they refer to composites of body and soul, or at least you should have. My point here is that changing our understanding of the aptness conditions for these predicates will not have any ontological import in our views, beyond what we already have for accepting Conciliar Christology.

Is there a worry about whether we've been wrong about the definitions of our terms? Have we always been wrong when defining terms, when we didn't include a "has a nature that" prefix? Has Christology thus required a change in virtually every predicate we employ? I do not think so. There's an important difference between a definition of a term and its ontological truth conditions. Consider an example, drawn from a classical understanding of virtues. Courage, let us say, is the (genus) cardinal virtue which (differentia) moderates the irascible appetite. That, or something very similar, is a traditional definition of "courage." But under what conditions is that term apt of something?

Platonists will say it is when that person instantiates the universal, Courage. Accident theorists will say it is when that person has an inhering courage accident. Other views will have other ontological truth conditions. If I go from being an accident theorist to a Platonist, say, I don't by doing so need to revise my definition of "courage," or my definitions of virtually all other predicates I employ. For the definition never included reference to an accident. The definitions stay the same in my conversion to Platonism. What changes is the ontological conditions under which I think the terms, so defined, are apt of things. Likewise, in this scenario. I don't need to change my definition of the term "sitting" in virtue of modifying my understanding of the conditions under which it is apt to say of you that you are sitting. So, this move does not require wholesale revision of the definitions of our terms.

Elsewhere in this book I have claimed that those who dislike predicating robust predicates of natures may be able to paraphrase such predicates away in

the solutions I proffer. One might wonder whether that's the case here.[19] I do not see that one faces any more difficult obstacles here than are faced in other instances of such paraphrase. As stated, I've explained the aptness conditions for sitting as being "has a nature that is shaped thus-and-so." Those who deny that natures can be shaped may perhaps substitute "has a nature because of which he (the person) is shaped thus-and-so." I myself confess perplexity about how the nature might accomplish this. How could a concrete nature be shapeless? How can a flesh and blood composite of body and soul have no shape to it? Perhaps the opponent of shape predicates for natures thinks of the natures as abstract. In such a case, I again do not see how the nature itself— that abstract, shareable entity—can be that in virtue of which a thing is shaped in a sitting position. Doesn't he have the very same nature when he is *not* so shaped? How is that abstract nature, had by both Peter and Paul at the same time, explaining Peter's being seated and Paul's lying down simultaneously? Again, I am at a loss as to how the paraphrases would go. I should remind the reader at this point that it is not my obligation to provide such paraphrases. The opponent of robust predicates for assumed natures will be in need of them already prior to considering the questions of this chapter. For the texts of Conciliar Christology themselves require the opponent of robust predications to have a story to tell for all the conciliar texts that do predicate—or at least seem to predicate—robust predicates of Christ's assumed nature.

I conclude the discussion of this Objection from Incompatible Predicates with the claim that it is not sound. The proponent of Conciliar Christology and Thomistic Multiple Incarnations is free to use either the Substitutional (P), the Substitutional (C), or the response from this subsection to reply to that objection.

III. THE OBJECTION FROM TOO MANY THINKERS

The previous objection focused on one divine person assuming multiple human natures; this objection focuses on multiple divine persons assuming one human nature. In what follows I first present the objection by means of drawing an analogy to other metaphysical discussions. Then I present solutions to the objection.

III.a. A Statement of the Objection

One objection to some views of the ontology of the human person is that they result in too many thinkers. For instance, suppose one thinks that the human

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[19] A reviewer has so wondered.

person is the smallest part of the human animal that does the thinking, say, the brain, or even just part of the brain (Hudson 2001, 147; Parfit 2012). And suppose that person also believes that there exist human animals. Then there is a thinker which is the brain (or subsection of the brain). But there also appears to be a thinker that is the animal as well. For, that animal has as parts all the parts that the brain has (and then some), and the brain thinks in virtue of having its parts do what they are doing, so the animal, it seems, should think in virtue of having its parts do what they are doing. The same worry arises for those who think that there are such things as the upper half of our bodies. The whole animal (or the brain) thinks, but for the same reasons there is good reason to think that the upper half thinks, too. And likewise, for any ontology in virtue of which there are larger wholes of which the purportedly thinking thing is a part (e.g., mereological universalism, which says that for any set of things, no matter how far flung or separated they are from one another, there is something composed of them). In each case, the worry of Too Many Thinkers crops up.[20]

Similarly, suppose that one thinks that humans are composed of matter and soul, and that the soul is that which thinks. Again, there seem to be too many thinkers. The soul is thinking thoughts, but the composite human is thinking thoughts as well.

Now consider the case of multiple divine persons assuming one human nature. The human nature does not count as a person, since it is assumed, and as I defined the terms "hypostasis" and "supposit" (Chapter 1, Section IV.a), anything assumed is not a hypostasis. Now, the three divine persons obviously count as persons. They each rightly can be said to be thinking anything that the human nature thinks. That seems to entail too many thinkers in the case of multiple divine persons assuming a single human nature. There's one thing, the human nature, with its own intellectual soul and center of activity, which performs its own actions in union with the divine nature, as the councils say (Tanner 1990, 129). In addition, there are *three* persons who think in virtue of that activity of that one thing. That's too many thinkers for one thing's activity.

III.b. A Response to the Objection

In reply, I deny that this is too many thinkers. This is exactly the right number of thinkers. Were we to have any answer other than "three" to the question "How many thinkers are there in this scenario?" we would have a problem. For in such a case either at least one of the divine persons would

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[20] For more on this worry, see Blatti (2016) and the resources cited therein.

not count as a thinker, or something in addition to the divine persons would be a thinker.

Now, divine persons count as thinkers when incarnate. The Word counted as thinking in virtue of the activity of the human nature, as Leo said in his Tome to Flavian (Tanner 1990, 80). So too would the Father and Spirit, were they incarnate. And so there must be at least three thinkers, in this scenario.

Is there reason to think that there is something *in addition to* the divine persons that should count as a thinker? That depends on what it takes to be a thinker. Suppose we take "thinker" to apply to anything that performs the activity relevant to thought, and also anything which has that performing thing as a component, in any sense of that word. Then we'd have to say that the human nature is a thinker, since, in some sense, it is a component of the persons in question.[21] But we needn't understand the term in that sense. We could say, instead, that "thinker" is a *maximal predicate*, by which I mean it only applies to the largest entities in question, and not to any of those entities' components. "Supposit," as I've defined it, is a maximal predicate. In such a case, since the persons are not components of any larger entities they fulfill the conditions for being thinkers, but since the human nature is a component of each person (in the shared assumption case under consideration), the human nature does not count as a thinker. In such a case, when "thinker" is understood in a maximal sense, we get exactly three thinkers. So, I deny that there are too many thinkers in this scenario. There are exactly the right number.

One might question at this point how one goes about dividing maximal from non-maximal predicates in a non-arbitrary, non-question-begging way.[22] Here's something that I think is true for everyone: predicates are a messy business. They can be constructed willy-nilly. As merely linguistic items, if we can give them meaningful truth conditions, we can populate language with more predicates (and maybe even if we can't provide meaningful truth conditions). So, I can make a predicate, "Halerple," by which I mean a thing the legs of which are not the same length. And another predicate "Pareerhle," by which I mean a *supposit* that has a nature the legs of which are not of the same length. After so defining the terms, Christ may have been pareerhle and halerple, whereas his human nature could only have been halerple. This is relevant to the question, since, to my mind, on anyone's view, dividing predicates up will be something messy, ugly, and not subject to air-tight, helpful principles. In short: predicate formation is arbitrary and unprincipled, which infects predicate

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[21] There are interesting things to consider here about the divine nature, too. For some relevant later conciliar documents on this matter, accepted by the Catholic Church, see Constitution 2, On the Error of Abbot Joachim, from the Fourth Lateran Council (Tanner 1990, 231).

[22] I thank a reviewer for raising this question.

analysis. My practice is to look at the usage that the terms get in the ecumenical councils. If a term, or a relevantly similar term, gets said of a nature, then I, too, say it of the nature. "Hung [on a cross]" is said of Christ's human nature, so I apply it to that nature as well. "Sat" is not said of the nature, but I take it to be relevantly similar to "hung," so I'd be happy to say "the nature sat" of Christ's human nature. Other terms, like "is a person" are explicitly not said of the human nature.

IV. BRIAN HEBBLETHWAITE'S OBJECTION FROM COEXISTENT COMMUNITIES

One theologian who has argued against the logical coherence of multiple incarnations—understood as more than one incarnation of any divine person in any creation—is Brian Hebblethwaite.[23] He writes:

> [M]ultiple incarnations of the same Person of the Trinity—in actuality, of the divine Son—are ruled out by considerations of logic. Here the very idea makes no sense. One individual subject cannot, without contradiction, be thought capable of becoming a series of individuals, or, a fortiori, a coexistent community of persons.   (2001, 333)

He also claims that the incarnation of the Father and Holy Spirit are unfitting. He writes:

> [I]ncarnations of the Father and the Spirit are ruled out by considerations of appropriateness. The idea is not incoherent; but, despite its revelatory potentialities, it is not as fitting as that of the incarnation of the Son, with all its soteriological import.   (2001, 333)

Put in the language of Chapter 2, one might provide answers to the Personal and Temporal Questions as follows:

The Hebblethwaitean Personal Answer:	It is logically possible that each divine person become incarnate; though it is unfitting for the Father or Spirit to become incarnate.
The Hebblethwaitean Temporal Answer:	It is impossible for any divine person to assume multiple natures, whether sequentially or simultaneously.

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[23] See, for instance, Hebblethwaite (2001, 2008, 74). For critical discussion of Hebblethwaite's arguments, see Thomas Morris (1987, 181–4), Peter Kevern (2002) and Oliver Crisp (2009, chap. 8), and Le Poidevin (2011). This section and the next are taken from my Pawl (2016b).

I do not know how Hebblethwaite would answer either the Natural or the Sharing Question. Since it is unfitting for the other persons to become incarnate, it would be unfitting for them to become incarnate and share a created nature with the Son. But that alone does not answer the question of whether it is *possible* for either the Father or Spirit to share a nature with the Son (or each other).

Hebblethwaite puts forward multiple arguments for his answer to the Temporal Question. With respect to his answer to the Personal Question, he offers far less argumentation, and hedges his claims by noting the notorious difficulty of handling arguments from fittingness (Hebblethwaite 2001, 332–3). Here I will focus on the argumentation offered for his Temporal Answer. Then, in the following section, I will provide a response to it.

IV.a. A Statement of the Objection

Hebblethwaite's most recent reiteration of his main argument for the impossibility of multiple incarnations of the same divine person is as follows:

> I have argued for the impossibility of multiple incarnations, chiefly on the grounds that if we take seriously the point insisted on by Morris himself that the ultimate subject of Jesus' life is God the Son, then any other purported incarnation, here or elsewhere, would have the same ultimate subject and thus be the same person. In the context of Resurrection belief, this would entail the presence, in the eschaton, of a number of finite personal vehicles of the divine life, all of them coexistent and theoretically capable of interpersonal relation. This makes no sense.   (Hebblethwaite 2008, 74)

He goes on to quote his own earlier phrasing that I quoted above:

> One individual subject cannot, without contradiction, be thought capable of becoming a series of individuals, or, *a fortiori*, a coexistent community of persons.   (Hebblethwaite 2008, 74)

Call this argument the *Argument from Coexistent Communities*.

The argument has received some attention in the literature, though just what, exactly, the form of the argument is has been disputed. Kevern (2002, 343), Crisp (2009, 157–64), and Le Poidevin (2011) all analyze arguments from Hebblethwaite, but in different ways. In what follows, I will present their interpretations before presenting my own. Crisp and Le Poidevin interpret the argument above, whereas Kevern interprets an argument I go on to discuss later in Section V. I turn my attention to Crisp and Le Poidevin here.

Crisp claims that Hebblethwaite requires three additional but unstated premises to reach his conclusion. Crisp says (2009, 158–9) they are (keeping his numbering):

1. Any human nature assumed by a divine person is numerically identical with that divine person.
2. A divine incarnation has to be the same person, human as well as divine.
3. A divine person can have at most one human nature.

By "human nature," Crisp means a concrete nature. In this sense of the term, the nature is an individual thing, but need not be an ultimate subject of a life, to use Hebblethwaite's terminology. In cases of incarnation, the person doing the assuming is the ultimate subject of life.

I do not agree with Crisp's claim that these three assumptions are required. It appears to me that Crisp's 3 is the conclusion that Hebblethwaite is striving for. For if 3 is true, then it follows trivially, from 3 alone, that it is impossible for Christ, the divine person, to have more than one human nature. But the possibility of multiple incarnations under dispute here requires precisely that it *is* possible that Christ have more than one human nature. Going the other direction, if Hebblethwaite's conclusion is true and multiple incarnations are impossible, it follows straightforwardly that no divine person can have two human natures, since that would be a case of multiple incarnations. So, I doubt that Hebblethwaite would be happy having to take on 3 as an assumption, since assuming 3 for the sake of proving the impossibility of multiple incarnations begs the question.

Consider the first assumption. I have grave reservations here, too. Crisp says that (2009, 159) "the first assumption is commonplace in Christology: many theologians maintain that Jesus of Nazareth just *is* God incarnate." I agree that it is commonplace for theologians to think that Jesus is God incarnate. However, I deny that this is relevant to 1, since 1 is not making an identity claim between the relata: Jesus of Nazareth and God incarnate. It is making an identity claim between the relata: Christ's assumed human nature (CHN) and the divine person. CHN is neither Jesus of Nazareth nor God incarnate. The name "Jesus" names a person, but the assumed human nature itself is no person. While Crisp concedes the truth of the first assumption in his analysis, I will go on to reject it. But I should say that I see the impetus to claim that Hebblethwaite is relying on assumption 1, as will become clear in my forthcoming analysis of the argument.

Le Poidevin, too, claims something similar to Crisp's first assumption. The first premise of Le Poidevin's careful analysis of Hebblethwaite's argument is, following his numbering (2011, 231):

(1) If the Son is incarnate in x, then the Son = x.

Le Poidevin claims that this premise is a part of traditional Christology. He writes (2011, 231) "(1) is implied by the traditional doctrine of the incarnation: incarnation is identity."[24] Whether or not Le Poidevin is correct here relies upon what he takes the relation of "incarnate in" to be in Premise (1). To my mind, this seems true: "the Son was incarnate in CHN." More generally, a divine person is incarnate in whatever nature that divine person assumes. But if that is what Le Poidevin means by "incarnate in" in (1), then the premise is the same as Crisp's first assumption. As I said previously, I will go on to reject this identity claim.

Perhaps, instead, Le Poidevin means by "incarnate in" something else. Perhaps we can bring out the meaning clearly if we add a suffix to the relation—"incarnate in *the person*." If the Son is incarnate in the person, *x*, then the Son is identical with *x*. That seems true to me, though it *sounds* as if there is a person that is not the Son, and the Son is incarnate in that person, which is contrary to Conciliar Christology. But on this reading, we get bizarre sentences such as "the Son is incarnate in the Son" coming out true. Elsewhere, Le Poidevin writes (2011, 231) that "Incarnations are persons."

Rather than rely upon the analysis of Crisp or Le Poidevin, in what follows I will provide my own.

The argument seems to me to go as follows. We start by assuming that it is possible for there to be multiple incarnations of the same divine person. Our goal is to derive a contradiction, and so show that our assumption is false. Conciliar Christology teaches that the predicates an assumed, created nature would make apt of a mundane person, were that nature not assumed, the created nature makes apt of the divine person when assumed (i.e., the idioms are communicated). But now consider the eschaton. There, the "personal vehicles of the divine life," that is, the assumed, created natures, coexist and are capable of interpersonal relation. And this, in turn, entails that one individual subject has *become* a coexistent community of persons. But it is impossible for one individual subject to become a coexistent community of persons. I take this impossibility claim to be quite important to the argument. Hebblethwaite saw fit to quote it in his later presentation of his argument, which leads me to think that he took this passage to present his intent well. Thus, since a contradiction was derived from the initial assumption of the possibility of multiple incarnations, that purported possibility is no possibility at all—if the possibility of *x* entails the truth of a contradiction, and it is impossible for a contradiction to be true, then it is impossible for *x* to be true.

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[24] Le Poidevin notes, though, that this premise "would be false on one understanding of the composite model" of the incarnation (cf. (Leftow 2004; Stump 2004)). This claim, together with the claim that the traditional doctrine implies (1), entails that Stump and Leftow's Christologies are inconsistent with the traditional doctrine. I believe this to be false, at least as far as Stump's Christology is concerned.

And so, it is not possible for there to be multiple incarnations of the same divine person.

One might formalize the argument as follows, letting "HN1" and "HN2" name human natures that are assumed in the allegedly possible situation in which the Son assumes two natures:

1. Suppose that there are multiple incarnations of the same person in two natures, HN1 and HN2.
   (For *reductio*.)

2. If the ultimate subject of Jesus' life is God the Son, then the ultimate subject of any incarnation [of the Son] is God the Son.

3. The ultimate subject of Jesus' life is God the Son.

4. The ultimate subject of any incarnation [of the Son] is God the Son.
   (From 2, 3.)

5. The ultimate subject of both HN1 and HN2 is God the Son.
   (From 1, 4.)

6. If the ultimate subject of both HN1 and HN2 is God the Son, then, in the eschaton, HN1 and HN2 coexist and are capable of interpersonal relation.
   (From "Resurrection belief.")

7. If, in the eschaton, HN1 and HN2 coexist and are capable of interpersonal relation, then one individual subject—God the Son—is capable of becoming a series of individuals, or a coexistent community of persons.

8. One individual subject—God the Son—is capable of becoming a series of individuals, or a coexistent community of persons.
   (From 5, 6, 7.)

9. It is impossible that one individual subject—God the Son—is capable of becoming a series of individuals, or a coexistent community of persons.
   (Assume.)

10. Contradiction!
    (8, 9.)

11. Thus, it is not the case that it is possible that there are multiple incarnations of the same person.
    (*Reductio*, 1–10.)

What ought we to make of this argument? It is formally valid, as presented. So, if the proponent of multiple incarnations of the same divine person is to reject it, she must reject at least one of the premises. But which? In the next section, I assess the truth of the premises of the Objection from Coexistent Communities.

IV.b. A Response to the Objection

Which premise ought the proponent of the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and Thomistic Multiple Incarnations reject? The first premise, Premise 1, is an assumption made for *reductio*. Hebblethwaite is saying, "suppose that *this* is true." An appropriate response at this juncture is not to say, "No, I will not suppose along with you." So, rejecting 1 is not the way to go.

Consider, then Premise 2. Here I insert "of the Son" into Hebblethwaite's language since I take this to be his intent. I concede the truth of this premise. Conciliar Christology has it that in virtue of being assumed, the predicates that the created human nature would normally make apt of the merely human person in a non-assumption case are made apt of the divine person. According to St Leo's Tome to Flavian (Tanner 1990, 81), endorsed at the Council of Chalcedon, it is because the Son's human nature hung on a cross that it is true to say that the Son, or even that God, hung on the cross.[25] Since any other incarnation would be an instance of assumption, the same reasoning should apply in those cases as well. The predicates transfer to the person.

The next premise, 3, is unstated. Our taking seriously of the point of the antecedent, as Hebblewaithe suggests we do, is, I take it, our granting it as true. And I do think that the proponent of Conciliar Christology is bound to assert the truth of that premise. So, I will leave Premise 3 unchallenged as well. Step 4 follows straightforwardly by Modus Ponens, and so it, too, deserves a pass. Premise 5 applies the generalization in Premise 4 to an allegedly possible case of multiple incarnations. It, too, is conceded.

The next moves are where the difficulties begin. Hebblethwaite claims that the foregoing steps of the argument, along with a belief in the resurrection, entail:

> the presence, in the eschaton, of a number of finite personal vehicles of the divine life, all of them coexistent and theoretically capable of interpersonal relation.   (Hebblethwaite 2008, 74)

I take these "vehicles of divine life" to be the assumed natures. And I concede that multiple incarnations would imply, given the doctrinal statements about the resurrection in the first seven ecumenical councils and elsewhere in the tradition (e.g., the Apostles' and Athanasian Creeds), that both HN1 and HN2 would exist in the eschaton. Would they be capable of "interpersonal relation?" That depends upon the meaning of the term.

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[25] Paul Gondreau (2009, 216) claims that Leo's Tome was "solemnly endorsed at Chalcedon" and Herbert Relton (1917, 44) says similarly.

Consider some potential definitions.

Interpersonal   x and y are interpersonally related if and only if (i) x is a
Relation₁: person, (ii) y is a person, and (iii) x and y are related to
                     one another in a way that "makes use of" or "involves"
                     their personhood.

What is it to make use of or involve something else's personhood? I have no
definition to offer. But perhaps examples will be of use. If I use you as a chair,
I am relating to you, but not relating to you qua person: I could use your
corpse in the same way. And if I use you merely to warm my side of the bed,
then, again, I am not relating to you qua person: I could use your dog in the
same way. But if you and I converse about metaphysics, then you and I are
related qua person, since it is in virtue of our rational natures that we are
capable of having such a conversation.

Are HN1 and HN2 related to one another by Interpersonal Relation₁?
No, I think. For neither HN1 nor HN2 fulfills *any* of the conjuncts of
Interpersonal Relation₁. Neither HN1 nor HN2 *is* a person, in the trad-
itional sense of the term. For to be a person is to be a hypostasis with a
rational nature, and neither HN1 nor HN2 fulfill the conditions for being
a hypostasis presented in Chapter 1, Section IV.a. Even if one eschews the
traditional interpretation of personhood in these debates, the orthodox
Christian, including Hebblethwaite, will be unwilling to allow for an as-
sumed nature to *be* a person in any sense of the term, since that would
entail two persons in the incarnation, which no orthodox thinker will
admit. So HN1 and HN2 do not fulfill the conditions for being persons,
and so do not fulfill the first or second condition of Interpersonal Relation₁.
Rather, in this scenario, HN1 and HN2 are *assumed by* a person—the Son of
God; it is false to say that each *is* a person. And since they are not persons,
they cannot relate in ways that involve their personhood, any more than saints
Thomas and Bonaventure could relate in the eschaton in ways that involve
their parenthood.

Perhaps, then, we should interpret interpersonal relations in the following
way:

Interpersonal   x and y are interpersonally related if and only if (i) x is
Relation₂: rational, (ii) y is rational, and (iii) x and y are related to
                     one another in a way that "makes use of" or "involves"
                     their rationality.[26]

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[26] Depending on how much use of their rationality is required, this definition will preclude
some individuals from interpersonal relationship, for instance, infants. Nothing in this definition
requires an exact placement of the usage of rationality. The reader is free to lower or raise the bar,
so to speak, to fit his or her own views on when or whether newborns can have interpersonal
relations. I thank Faith Glavey Pawl for bringing this point to my attention.

This definition of the term understands interpersonal relations to be relations between individuals that have rationality. HN1 and HN2 are rational; each is, as the texts of Conciliar Christology say of CHN, "flesh enlivened by a rational soul," a "holy body rationally ensouled," and "human flesh which is possessed by a rational and intellectual soul" (Tanner 1990, 41, 44, 115). I see no reason to think that HN1 and HN2 could interact rationally with mundane humans in the eschaton—say, by talking with them, or, perhaps better to say, by the person of the Word talking through them—but that it is impossible for them to interact rationally with one another. And so, for my part, if it uses the second definition of interpersonal relations, I grant Premise 6.

Before I discuss Premise 7, which I think is false, I will briefly say a bit about each of the other remaining moves. Step 8 follows from 5, 6, and 7. If "A" is true, and "if A then B" is true, and "if B then C" is true, then, it follows that "C" is true. That is precisely the inferential form in deriving 8 from 5, 6, and 7. And so, were 5, 6, and 7 true, 8 would be true as well.

Consider 9; I concede it. It is impossible for one thing, x, to become two different (i.e., non-identical) things y and z. This is not to say that it is impossible for, say, a human to be sawn in half, as the unfortunate Apostle Simon the Zealot evinced as he earned his frond of palm. There, in a sense, one thing—a human—has become two things. Rather, it is impossible for a human to be sawn in half, and for each half to be identical to the original human, since each half has different properties, and nothing has properties different from itself. A thing and itself cannot go their (its?) separate ways.

Were one thing able to become identical with two different things, the transitivity of identity would have to be false:

The Transitivity of Identity: If x is identical with y, and y is identical with z, then x is identical with z.

For letting "y" name the original thing, and "x" and "z" name the different things, both conjuncts of the antecedent are true but the consequent is false. Y, the original thing, is identical with both x and z. But, since they are different, x and z are not identical. Thus, any who grant the truth of the transitivity of identity will grant the truth of 9. So, I agree with Hebblethwaite that the situation he has claimed follows from multiple incarnations is, in fact, impossible. But I deny, as will become clear, that the situation does, in fact, follow from multiple incarnations of the same divine person.

Step 10 follows from the two previous premises by conjunction. And the conclusion, 11, follows from the preceding steps. And so, given the truth of Premise 7, Hebblethwaite has proven his conclusion. But I deny that Premise 7 is true.

Recall that Premise 7 says:

7. If, in the eschaton, HN1 and HN2 coexist and are capable of interpersonal relation, then one individual subject—God the Son—is capable of becoming a series of individuals, or a coexistent community of persons.

The truth of the antecedent follows from two premises I have already granted: 5 and 6, so I am rationally bound to accept that antecedent. I deny, however, that the antecedent implies the consequent.

Suppose the antecedent is true, and that HN1 and HN2 are interpersonally related, in the second sense of that term. Say, they are having a conversation, or, as it might be better to say, that the one person, the Son, is talking to himself through them. How does that entail that the Son is a coexistent community of persons? Neither HN1 nor HN2, itself, is a person. No Conciliar Christologist should grant the claim that if there are two natures, then there are two persons. For the incarnate deity has two natures, and yet is one person. Furthermore, neither of the two natures fulfills the conditions for being a person, since a necessary condition for being a person is being unassumed, and, by hypothesis, both HN1 and HN2 are assumed. And so, it is wrong to count them as persons. But then, if they are not the persons which make up the coexistent community of persons, who are the persons? There are no candidates for being the persons in the coexistent community of persons besides HN1 and HN2. I see no reason to think that the antecedent implies the Son's becoming multiple persons, and so no reason to think he becomes a coexistent community of persons.

Did God the Son become a series of individuals? Not so far as I can see. It is true in this scenario that he assumed a series of individuals, HN1 and HN2. But it is false that he *became identical with* either of those two natures. (Here, I believe, we see why Crisp thought that Hebblethwaite needs the first assumption.)

I see no good reason to believe 7. And I see good reason to deny it. I see much support for the claim that it is not the case that the Son becomes identical to any nature that he assumes, or to the sum or set of assumed natures. Were an assumed nature—say CHN, the nature that the Son did, in fact, assume—identical to the Son, then, contrary to the teachings of Conciliar Christology: (i) CHN is itself a person (since the Son is himself a person); (ii) assumption is a relation that holds between a thing and its very self (since CHN is identical to the Son); (iii) the Son is a composite of body and soul (since CHN is such a composite); (iv) and there was a time before which the Son was not (since there was a time before which CHN was not). All four of these claims are precluded by Conciliar Christology. The identity claim that Hebblethwaite needs to show the incoherence of multiple incarnations is one that is both under-defended and falsified by Conciliar Christology.[27] On

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[27] A helpful referee suggests the following interpretation of Hebblethwaite's argument: "If we agree that when HN1 is assumed by God the Son, then we get a person...should we not say similarly that when HN2 is assumed by God the Son, then we again get a person...And does it not follow that if God the Son assumes both HN1 and HN2, then we have two persons...?" Such a read of his argument has the merit that it does not require Hebblethwaite to claim that each

Conciliar Christology, no assumed nature becomes identical to the Second Person of the Trinity.

Perhaps at this point it will be useful for me to summarize the foregoing criticism of Hebblethwaite's argument. I will do so in the form of a dilemma argument. Either interpersonal relationships are understood as Interpersonal Relation₁ or as Interpersonal Relation₂. Consider the cases.

If understood in the first way, then I accept 7 but deny 6. I deny 6 on that reading because the natures cannot be interpersonally related if, as on the first reading, such relation requires personhood of the things so related. 6 is the antecedent of 7, and so, since 6 is false, 7 must be true (a false antecedent in a material conditional (like 7) implies the truth of the conditional).

If interpersonal relationships are understood in the second way, then I accept 6 but deny 7. For the reasons given above, the antecedent of 7 does not imply the truth of the consequent. Moreover, there are independent reasons for denying the truth of 7.

Thus, whether we understand interpersonal relations in the first or second way, at least one premise of the argument is false. It follows that the argument is unsound.

To conclude my discussion of this argument, I disagree with Hebblethwaite that multiple incarnations of the same divine person entail that one person becomes a coexistent community of persons.

V. BRIAN HEBBLETHWAITE'S OBJECTION FROM DIVINE SUBJECTHOOD

I present a second, related argument that Hebblethwaite gives, which Kevern attempts to analyze, in the following section. Then, in the next section, I respond to that argument.

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assumed nature is itself a person. Rather, the persons we get are results of the assumptions, and not the things assumed.

In response, consider a proof by cases. Either "getting" a person entails that a new person comes about from the assumption, or it does not. If it does not require a new person, then two assumptions will not imply two persons, and we are no closer to showing that multiple simultaneous incarnations are impossible. If, on the other hand, the "get" is read to entail that a new person comes about, then two incarnations will, in fact, yield two new persons, with all its problematic implications. But then, on this reading, a single incarnation will "get" a new person as well, and that's one too many persons: the eternal Second Person of the Trinity, and the new person. Such a reading of "get" implies two persons in a scenario with a single incarnation. Hebblethwaite will rightly reject such an interpretation of "get." And so in neither case will this new interpretation of Hebblethwaite's argument provide a sound argument for his conclusion.

V.a. A Statement of the Objection

Hebblethwaite presents another argument against the claim that one divine person could become incarnate more than once:

> If God the Son is one divine subject, only one human subject can actually *be* the incarnate, human, form of that one divine life. Otherwise, one would be attributing a split personality to the divine Son. [original emphasis]
>
> (Hebblethwaite 2001, 324)

In his analysis, Kevern writes of this passage:

> It is an admirably clear and simple scheme that rests on a sort of arithmetic:
>   God the Son is only one (divine) subject,
>   who is capable of incarnation as only one (divine-human) subject,
>   who therefore has only one, unique personality.
>   We could name this 'Hebblethwaite's equation': 1=1=1. Assuming that each of the assertions is correct and that they are correctly related, the logic is inescapable and his argument beyond dispute.   (Kevern 2002, 343)

For my own part, I neither see the logical form of the argument as Kevern presents it, nor the reason for claiming that these three indented lines present it.

Hebblethwaite is not arguing that, as Kevern indicates with the "therefore" in the third line of the equation, God the Son has only one, unique personality. Rather, he is arguing what appears to be provided as a second premise—that the Son cannot become incarnate twice. So, it looks to me that Kevern has misdiagnosed the conclusion to be a premise, and the premise—if it is a premise of the argument—to be the conclusion.

Moreover, what logical inference rule would allow the concluding of the third line from the second and first? By Kevern's formalization, it would appear to be an identity rule ("1=1=1"). But that's not the inferential pattern that Hebblethwaite is employing. The passage includes a conditional premise ("If God the Son … one divine life") that is not an identity claim. The passage includes no identity claims. It isn't that I see the logic but fail to see its inescapability; I don't see the logic as being what Kevern claims it to be.

I take Hebblethwaite's argument in this passage to be as follows:

12. If God the Son is one divine subject, then only one human subject can actually be the incarnate, human, form of that one divine life.
13. God the Son is one divine subject.
14. Only one human subject can actually be the   (From 12, 13.) incarnate, human, form of that one divine life.

The final sentence of the quotation from Hebblethwaite is given as proof for the conditional premise, Premise 12. Let the antecedent of 12 be named

"D" (for "divine subject") and the consequent "H" (for "human form"). If Hebblethwaite can show that it is false that D and not-H, then he has shown that it is true that if D, then H. This is true because ~(D&~H) is logically equivalent with D→H. I take the "otherwise" sentence above to be saying something like this:

15. If God the Son is one divine subject, but it is *not the case that* only one human subject can actually be the incarnate, human, form of that one divine life [that is, if (D&~H)], then the Son would have a split personality.
16. But the Son could not have a split personality.
17. Thus, it is false that (God the Son is one divine   (that is, ~(D&~H),
    subject, but it is *not the case that* only one   from 15 and 16,
    human subject can actually be the incarnate,   Modus Tollens.)
    human, form of that one divine life)

Since 17 is logically equivalent to 12, a proof of 17 provides support for 12 as well. What should we make of Hebblethwaite's main argument, and this justification of its first premise? In the next section, I consider that question.

V.b. A Response to the Objection

Since I deny the conclusion of his argument, and the argument is formally valid, I must deny a premise of the argument. I concede the truth of the second premise, Premise 13, so I must deny the conditional premise. And since the conditional premise is the conclusion of the second argument (15–17), which also is formally valid, I must deny a premise of that argument as well. Which premise I deny depends on the definition of "split personality." Consider two cases.

If, on the one hand, having a split personality entails there being multiple persons, then I concede that the Son cannot have split personalities, as premise 16 states, since there cannot be multiple persons in an incarnation if there is only one divine person involved. But then I also deny that taking on two human natures entails that there are multiple persons, for reasons given previously in discussion of Premise 7. And so, on this interpretation of having split personalities, I deny that 15 is true, since I grant its conjunctive antecedent but deny its consequent.

If, on the other hand, a split personality does not entail multiple persons, but instead entails multiple rational centers, or intellects, or faculties by which a person can think, or something like that, then I concede the truth of 15— becoming incarnate in more than one rational nature would entail the Son's having multiple rational centers. But then I also think that becoming incarnate

in a single rational nature would entail the Son's having multiple rational centers! The Third Council of Constantinople (Tanner 1990, 129–30) clearly teaches that the incarnate Son has two wills, which are the operations of the two distinct natures he has. And so, I deny the truth of 16—not only could the Son have split personalities, in this sense of the term, he in fact did have split personalities in this attenuated sense, according to Conciliar Christology.

Thus, whichever of these two understandings of "split personalities" is true, I deny some premise or other of his argument from Divine Subjecthood or the intermediate argument in support of premise 12.

Now, there is a trivial sense in which 14, "only one human subject can actually be the incarnate, human, form of that one divine life," is true. Given the definite article in the premise, there couldn't be more than one human subject that is *the* incarnate, human form of the one divine life, any more than we can say of a woman or her sister that she is *the* daughter of their mother. But since the very question at stake here is whether there could be more than one incarnate, human form of the one divine life, we ought not to let the "the" settle the question. For if we read the "the" in such a robust sense, so as to require it to preclude multiple incarnations, then no proponent of multiple incarnations will grant 12, since it includes the "the" claim that automatically precludes multiple incarnations.

Similarly, later on the same page Hebblethwaite says:

> [F]or classical Christology, the whole life of Jesus *is* that of God the Son incarnate . . .
> The risen Christ is the human face of God for ever. There cannot be a number of such,
> interrelated, finite, human "faces" of God in heaven.   (2001, 324)

Here again there is a suspicious definite article—"the risen Christ is *the* human face of God for ever." But even aside from that point, there is reason to be skeptical of this inference. I concede that the suspicious definite article is apt in the sentence. We may take ourselves to have good reason to think that there will be but one incarnation in the actual creation.[28] But I deny that it shows us anything about whether, in a different creation, there could be multiple incarnations. That is, even if it is true, and we have good reason to believe, that the human nature Christ assumed is *the* human face of God forever, that is insufficient to show that there *cannot* be a number of such faces in another situation, under another providential plan.

To conclude: I take the Objection from Divine Subjecthood to be unsound due to having at least one false premise, depending on how one understands the term, "split personality."

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[28] I am not claiming that we do have such good reason. I am merely conceding the point, and saying that we may take ourselves to have such good reason.

VI. ERIC MASCALL'S OBJECTION FROM
CONFERRED PERSONALITY

Eric Mascall offers an objection to the possibility of one divine person assuming multiple instances of the same type of (abstract) nature, for instance, the divine person assuming two human natures, or as he says, human nature twice over. This objection focuses on the Temporal Question, arguing that the proper answer to it is that no divine person can become incarnate in the same type of nature multiple times, but remaining silent on whether a divine person can assume multiple different abstract nature types at the same time. In the next section, I will present the objection. In the section following that, I will respond to it.

VI.a. A Statement of the Objection

Mascall writes the following:

> To suggest this possibility [that the Son might become incarnate in different types of rational natures] is, it must be emphasized, totally different from suggesting that God might become incarnate on more than one occasion in the *same* rational nature, that, for instance, Socrates and Gautama Buddha might, equally with Jesus of Nazareth, be incarnations of the divine Word. The Word became man by assuming a human nature which had no personal individuality of its own and, in assuming it, he conferred his personal individuality upon it; if *per impossibile* [*sic*] he assumed, and conferred his personal individuality upon human nature twice over, there would not after all be two individuals but only one; which is simply a paradoxical way of saying that in fact human nature could not be assumed by the divine Word more than once, since it is individualised in his Person and that Person is numerically one.   (Mascall 1965, 41)

The idea here, I believe, goes as follows.[29] A principle of individuation, to do the work of individuating something, cannot be the sort of thing that can be had by

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[29] This argument is also discussed, briefly, by Sturch (1991, 196) in his longer discussion of Puccetti's (1969, 136–40) argument for the impossibility of multiple incarnations of one divine person. Puccetti's argument rests upon the claim that, given the transitivity of identity, if the Christ on our world were identical to the Word, and the Word were identical to the Christ on some other world, then the Christ on our world is the same thing as the Christ on that other world. But they are not the same thing, as they have different attributes. Sturch, to my mind, shows the error of this line of thought by pointing out that the proponent of traditional Christology would grant, in such a scenario, that the two Christs are really the same person as the Word. Only one person there. But there are different concrete natures, different things assumed. They are both taken up into the one divine person, but neither is, strictly speaking, identical with that divine person. Both are created, for instance, but the divine person is not created. See my discussion of Hebblethwaite's objection from Coexistent Communities in Section IV above for more on the transitivity of identity and why the person is not identical to any assumed nature.

two things of the same type at once. For instance, if specific parcels of matter individuate individual (mere) humans, as Aquinas thought,[30] then you and I cannot have the same matter at the same time. For if we did, that matter wouldn't be individuating me, or differentiating me from you. Similarly, again, following Aquinas for the sake of example, if matter individuates individuals of the same type, and angels have no matter, then there cannot be two angels of the same species, since in such a scenario there would be nothing to individuate one from the other. And, in fact, we find Aquinas claiming just that: that each angel is of its own species (*ST* I q.50 a.4 resp.). There is no problem of two angels of different species existing at the same time, since there are other ways to individuate or differentiate two entities of different types. For instance, their essential attributes are different. In Thomistic terms, even if their genus is the same, given that they are of different types, their differentia must be distinct. And so, they can be differentiated from one another or individuated by that differentia.

Now, a divine person, in assuming something, individuates that thing. So, the argument goes, while there would be no problem with the Word assuming, and so individuating, two things of different species (since they can be differentiated from one another by other means), to assume, and so individuate, two things of the same type would be impossible, like two humans with the same matter at the same time, or two matterless angels of the same species. One might put the argument as follows, where "*x*" is a particular thing (e.g., a parcel of matter) and not a type of thing (e.g., matter):

18. If *x* is a principle of individuation for some *y* of type N at time T, then *x* cannot be the principle of individuation for some other *z* of nature type N at T.

19. The divine person is the principle of individuation for some assumed thing of an abstract rational nature type at a certain time.

20. The divine person cannot be the principle of individuation for some other assumed thing of the same type of rational nature at the same time.   (18, 19, Modus Ponens.)

21. If the divine person cannot be the principle of individuation for some other assumed thing of the same type of rational nature at the same time, then the divine person cannot assume two natures of that type at the same time.

22. Thus, the divine person cannot assume two natures of that type at the same time.   (20, 21 Modus Ponens.)

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[30] See Brower (2012), Stump (2005, 47–50), and Wippel (2000, 351–75). Wippel includes careful discussion of the passages where Aquinas discusses matter as the principle of individuation for material substances.

What ought we to make of this argument? It is valid. But are the premises true? If they are, then we have a sound argument for the conclusion that certain answers to the Temporal Question are false, since they allow the possibility of one divine person to assume multiple natures of the same type at the same time. In particular, we have an argument for the falsity of Thomistic Multiple Incarnations, and so an argument for the falsity of the Extension of Conciliar Christology under discussion in this chapter. In the next section I respond to this argument.

VI.b. A Response to the Objection

Concerning the first premise of the argument, Premise 18, I think the reader ought to concede it. I think this even if the reader believes that there aren't such things as principles of individuation, or that the correct metaphysics ought not to countenance them. Nevertheless, the reason why they are posited is to individuate (and often, differentiate) an entity of a certain type. And such work is rendered inoperable if one and the same thing can do that sort of work for two things at once. Or, at least, that's what many people who have employed principles of individuation in their ontologies have thought. There may be room to posit individuators with multiple means of individuating. Perhaps we could envision the individuator as a metaphysical fork with three tines. It individuates by means of metaphorically skewering something, and it has three means by which to do so. In such a case, perhaps one would say that the resultant individuated object is individuated by the fork, but, more proximately, by being skewered on the middle tine of the fork. Even if there is sense to be made out of poly-individuators, as we might call them, they are foreign to the worldviews of those who employ principles of individuation. In short, the typical view of principles of individuation is that they individuate at most one thing of a type at a time. I will concede that view in this chapter. I will note, though, that if the reader is comfortable with poly-individuators, then the reader can say that the Son can individuate two natures of the same type, and so deny the truth of Premise 18.

Concerning the second premise, Premise 19, here there is room for disagreement about what individuates the human nature of Christ. There is also room to disagree on the need for individuators. Perhaps things just come individuated, thankyouverymuch. Or if Christ's assumed human nature does require an individuator, perhaps the matter of that nature could do the work, as the matter of the body/soul composite that is me does the work, according to Aquinas. Why couldn't an assumed rational nature be individuated by its matter? Were it to be so, then if the Word were to assume two human natures, each would be individuated, but not by the same thing at the same time. Or, perhaps the principles of individuation for individual assumed natures are created hypostatic unions. Each hypostatic union is a created, contingent

being, at least according to Aquinas (*ST* III q.2 a.7). Perhaps each can only be had by one nature, and essentially so. In such a case, having that hypostatic union would individuate one nature of a certain rational type from any other nature of that same type. So, one response to this argument is to deny the second premise, claiming that it requires a view of individuation one needn't affirm to be a Conciliar Christologist, or to be a proponent of any of the extensions of Conciliar Christology discussed in this book.

Another method of response is to focus on what is being referred to with the term "nature" in the above quotation from Mascall. It seems he means an abstract nature. For he talks of becoming incarnate in the *same* rational nature (his emphasis) and gives as an example of this becoming incarnate in Christ and Socrates. Were he referring to concrete natures, this wouldn't be a good example of the *same* nature being assumed more than once. Read in this light—reading his references to natures as references to abstract nature types—it makes sense why we might wonder how it could be that the Word becomes incarnate in the same nature twice. What would he *do* to it the second time to become incarnate in it again? The Second Person is already instantiating the abstract human nature on such a view. Would he begin standing in a second instantiation relation with it? Could a divine person simultaneously hypostatically unite with the same thing two times? What would that look like?

If this is the thought process that Mascall has in mind, I think that the problem with it is that it supposes a faulty view of what is assumed. The thing assumed is a flesh and blood composite of body and soul. It bleeds and hangs. Even letting Mascall use the word "nature" to mean "abstract nature," that abstract nature is not the assumed thing which the councils write about—it is not the flesh ensouled by a rational and intellectual soul.

So, I do not see a good reason to affirm the second premise of the argument, and I see some good reasons to think that Mascall has mischaracterized the thing which is assumed in the incarnation. Such a mischaracterization lends plausibility to his claim that the same nature cannot be assumed more than once simultaneously. But once we see that there are many ways to account for the individuation of an assumed nature, and that it isn't literally the same abstract thing being assumed in the alleged multiple assumptions, the strength of the argument vanishes.

VII. MICHAEL SCHMAUS ON THE INCARNATION OF THE FATHER OR HOLY SPIRIT

Michael Schmaus (1971, 242), a Roman Catholic priest and influential dogmatic theologian, argues that the incarnation of the Father or the Holy Spirit is "at the least, unfitting, if not impossible and meaningless." His focus, then, is

on the Personal Question. In the following section I will present his argument. In the section after that I will respond to it.

VII.a. A Statement of the Objection

Schmaus writes, concerning the question of whether another person than the Logos could have become man (that is, the *Personal Question* of Chapter 2, Section II.b) that:

> From the biblical viewpoint of salvation history, both the question itself and especially a positive answer to it are impossible. On the contrary, it would seem to contradict the meaning of the tri-personal life of God to maintain such a possibility. As we have seen, the incarnation means God's communication of himself to his creation, in that the Father gives himself to the Son and that this act of giving is, as it were, prolonged into creation.   (Schmaus 1971, 241–2)

Here Schmaus seems to have something like the following argument in mind:

23. The biblical view of salvation history is true.
24. If the biblical view of salvation history is true, then the Father's gift of self to the Son is prolonged into creation in the incarnation.
25. Thus, the Father's gift of self to the Son is prolonged into creation in the incarnation.   (23, 24 Modus Ponens.)
26. If the Father's gift of self to the Son is prolonged into creation in the incarnation, then it is impossible that the Father or the Holy Spirit become incarnate.
27. Therefore, it is impossible that the Father or the Holy Spirit become incarnate.   (25, 26 Modus Ponens.)

What to make of this argument? It is formally valid, as I have presented it. While I'm not sure that Schmaus had this exact argument in mind, something like this argument is in the right neighborhood. In the next section I will evaluate this argument as presented.

VII.b.. A Response to the Objection

I concede the first two premises, 23 and 24, for argument's sake. At very least, I'm in no position to argue that either is false. We would be better served asking a scriptural scholar to discuss those two premises. Given the truth of those two, the consequent of 24 follows by Modus Ponens: The

Father's gift of self to the Son is prolonged into creation in the incarnation. Put otherwise, 25 is true. If 26 is true, then, it would follow that his conclusion is true.

In my view, Schmaus is making a modal mistake in this argument when he affirms 26. The question at hand is whether it is *possible* for the Father or the Spirit to become incarnate. *That* is the claim that he disputes, noting that Aquinas disagreed with him on this point. We know Aquinas wasn't arguing that the Father or Spirit *did in fact* become incarnate. Rather, on his view, it is merely possible that they could. The modal mistake, in my view, is moving from what scripture says concerning how incarnation actually came about to the conclusion that it could not come about in any other way. Even if scripture does tell us that the Father's gift of self to the Son is prolonged into creation in the incarnation, it doesn't tell us *and, furthermore, that's the only way an incarnation could ever occur, in any possible situation*. But that is the claim Schmaus would need to argue from scriptural evidence to the claim that it is impossible for the Father or Son to become incarnate. In light of this modal mistake, I think the proponent of this extension of Conciliar Christology should deny the truth of Premise 26.

Schmaus goes on in the final two paragraphs of his discussion of multiple incarnations to focus on the Father and Spirit individually, giving reasons why neither could become incarnate. Concerning the Father, he writes:

> [I]f the Father gives himself directly to his creation, then his Son and Spirit are left, as it were, outside the process. This would mean that the Father expresses himself adequately in the Son, within the Trinity, and then expresses himself inadequately and separately in creation. The two self-expressions of the Father then would be unrelated.   (Schmaus 1971, 242)

Concerning the reasoning here, the reader receives no reason to think that the Son and Spirit *must be* left out of the process, were the Father to become incarnate. Why couldn't the Father make of gift of self to the Son, as Schmaus understands it, and then the Son and Spirit make a gift of the Father to the world? I see no reason provided to think that this is impossible, and so no reason to concede that the Son and Spirit must be left outside the process. It is a common view in both the east and the west that anything the divine persons do *ad extra*, that is, outside their inner life, they do in unison (see my discussion of Premise 14 in Chapter 2). If the Father were to become incarnate, the Son and Spirit would be involved in the incarnating, just as the Father and Spirit were involved in the Son's actual incarnating. If they need not be left outside the process—if it is at least possible that they remain in the process—then this reason gives no grounds for thinking it *impossible* that the Father become incarnate. Moreover, I see no reason given for why the expression of the Father must be inadequate in creation, supposing that he becomes incarnate. How the Father expresses himself to creation is his own

free, divine prerogative. Were he to become incarnate in some alternative providential plan, he could express himself differently to that creation. In such a case, I see no reason given to think that his self-expression would have to be inadequate. But then the proponent of this extension of Conciliar Christology has no reason to affirm that any of the unsavory alleged implications follow from the supposition that the Father become incarnate. The same is true of the reasoning concerning the incarnation of the Spirit, which I turn to now.

After discussing the alleged implications for the possibility of the Father becoming incarnate, Schmaus discusses the possibility of the incarnation of the Spirit. He writes:

> As regards the person of the Holy Spirit, he has the task, both within the Trinity and in the hypostatic union, of uniting the man Jesus and the divine Logos, and then the human race with Jesus. Both Greek and Latin theology have termed him the "Gift." That is to say, without prejudice to his immanent role within the Trinity, he possesses from eternity a relatedness to creation. Augustine declares that the first gift of love is love. When Father and Son send the Spirit they send that love in which they themselves are "We" to unite the man Jesus with the Logos and mankind with Jesus.   (Schmaus 1971, 242)

Here, again, it seems to me that Schmaus commits a modal blunder. The Spirit has a particular job of uniting the man Jesus and the divine Logos;[31] the Spirit is the gift and gives love as his gift; the Spirit is sent by the Father and Son. Let all that be true. Still, this does not show what it needs to for Schmaus's conclusion: it does not show that it is *impossible* for the Spirit to become incarnate, or that it is meaningless, as he says immediately after this quotation, and as I quoted him above as saying. For one thing, these listed attributes need not be necessary of the Spirit. For just one example, the incarnation is a contingent event, and so being that which unites the assumed human nature to the Logos is not something necessary of the Spirit. Is it true that, necessarily, in any possible situation that God could create, if there is an incarnation, then the Spirit is the divine person who unites the incarnated person to the assumed nature? If so, Schmaus gives no reason to think it is. I doubt very much that the biblical view of salvation history, on which he bases his argument, is clear on this point.

In the first quotation I give from Schmaus, he backs away from the impossibility claim, saying it is at least unfitting for the Father and Spirit to become incarnate. Has he shown that to be true? Fittingness is set against the backdrop of the evidence we have. And the evidence we have about the incarnation is primarily about what actually happened, and not what is

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[31] I would not have put it that way, as if there is a man there in addition to the Logos, and that man needs uniting with the Logos; but we can understand what he means.

merely possible. Perhaps there is a good case to be made that, *given* the facts as presented in scripture, an incarnation of the Father or the Spirit would be unfitting. But again, from this alone we cannot derive that it would be unfitting in any situation. For to do so, we would need to read the facts about the incarnation provided in scripture as being necessary for any incarnation. What is fitting in the current salvific economy might be unfitting in another; what is unfitting in the current economy might be fitting in another. And were God to have chosen another salvific economy, which God could have done, an incarnation of the Father or Spirit might not have been unfitting. If that's right, then the most that Schmaus can conclude here is that an incarnation of the Father or Spirit is unfitting, given how God has set up the salvific economy. But that is insufficient evidence for the claim that an incarnation of the Father or Spirit is necessarily unfitting, if not contradictory and meaningless.

 On this point, I follow Fr Roch Kereszty, who writes in his Christology textbook:

> We must also admit the possibility of other incarnations on other planets of our universe. However, as we have seen above, Christian revelation insists that there has been only one incarnation for humankind: Jesus alone is the perfect image of God and the one mediator between God and the human race.
>
> (Kereszty 2002, 382)

Here Kereszty argues that Christian revelation, including the biblical viewpoint of salvation history, allows for the possibility of other incarnations on other planets. He earlier made the point, citing Aquinas, that it also allows for the theoretical possibility of other incarnations on our own planet. But while allowing for the *possibility* of such incarnations, it precludes the *actuality* of such incarnations, at least as incarnations *for humankind*. What Schmaus needs for his conclusion to follow is for Christian revelation to preclude the theoretical possibility of multiple incarnations in any situation, under any providential plan, but this is precisely what it does not show.

VIII. KENNETH BAKER'S PRESENTATION OF THE OBJECTION TO MULTIPLE INCARNATIONS

As I noted at the beginning of this chapter, Baker claims that the majority of systematic theologians would answer the Personal Question by claiming that *only* the Son could become incarnate. In the next section, I will show the reasoning he gives for this claim. In the section following that, I will evaluate the reasoning.

VIII.a. A Statement of the Objection

Baker argues as follows, for the claim that *only* the Son could become incarnate:

> The reason for this opinion is that the incarnate God is the revelation, the visibility of the infinite and invisible God . . . In a very true sense the God-man Jesus Christ leads us to the Father; his is the *image* of the Father (see John 14:9). Now we know from Catholic doctrine about the Trinity that the Father generates the Son and that the Son is therefore the image or reflection of the Father. He is the expression of the Father. The Incarnate God-man, therefore, is the external expression of God. Since the Second Person of the Trinity is by nature the *image* of the Father, the *Word* of God, it would seem that only he could become man and thus become the visibility and revelation of God.   (Baker 2013, 48)

The argument appears to go as follows. Whichever divine person is incarnate, that person is the revelation, manifestation, and image of God. Now, of the three divine persons, the best suited for this role is the Son, who is called by scripture the *Word* and *image* of the Father. And so, it would seem that only the Son could become incarnate.

VIII.b. A Response to the Objection

As with previous scriptural cases for the impossibility of the Father or Spirit becoming incarnate, I think that Baker's argument suffers from the same modal blunder. Scripture tells us that the Son is actually the image of the Father, and the revelation of God. But it does not tell us that this is necessarily the case. It might be possible, for all scripture says, for the Spirit to be the manifestation, revelation, and image of the Father. If that were even possible, then the incarnation of the Spirit would not be precluded by this reasoning. Moreover, it is possible that a divine person become incarnate for reasons other than manifestation and revelation. And so even if the proponent of this argument were to claim that scripture teaches that, necessarily, only the Son could be the manifestation, revelation, and image of the Father, that still does not preclude the other divine persons from becoming incarnate in different created economies for different reasons.

In short, even if we suppose that scripture teaches that the Son is the actual manifestation of the Father, it does not teach that it is impossible for either of the remaining divine persons to manifest the Father, and it does not teach that it is a necessary condition of incarnation that the person incarnate be incarnate for the sake of manifesting or revealing God the Father. Or, more temperedly, Baker has not shown that scripture does teach such things, which is what he must show in order to make the scriptural case against the possibility of the Father and Holy Spirit becoming incarnate.

As with the other arguments I've discussed from scripture, then, I do not think that this argument shows the truth of its conclusion, that only the Son could become man.

IX. CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have considered seven objections to Thomistic Multiple Incarnations, arguing that none of them are satisfactory in showing the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and Thomistic Multiple Incarnations to be incoherent or inconsistent. I conclude that if the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and Thomistic Multiple Incarnations is incoherent or inconsistent, it remains to be shown.

4

Christic and the Interim State

I. INTRODUCTION

In this final chapter in the part of this book dealing with extensions concerning the natures of the incarnate God, I will consider whether Christ's descent into hell during the three days between his death and his resurrection implies any contradictions when conjoined with Conciliar Christology.[1] I am aware of the debates concerning whether "hell" is the proper translation of the terms used in the original languages. Perhaps "underworld" or "Hades" is a better translation. For my purposes here, I needn't take a stand on the exact destination of the descent; the problem arises no matter where Christ went. I will use all three terms—"hell," "underworld," and "Hades"—to refer to the destination of the descent, as do the theological authors I discuss.

One traditional teaching of Conciliar Christology, found in the *Definition of the faith* from the Council of Chalcedon, and elsewhere, is that the two natures in the hypostatic union, the divine and human natures, are inseparable (Tanner 1990, 86). Not only did the hypostatic union not end at Christ's death, but it will not end at any time in the future. Extended Conciliar Christology extends the conciliar teachings by adding an additional claim, the claim, found in the Apostles' and Athanasian Creeds (Denzinger 2002, paras 6, 40), that Christ descended into hell after his death, in the interim state prior to the resurrection of his body.

One worry someone might have at this point is the following. Relations require the existence of their relata. You can't hold something above your head if it isn't. Likewise, the Son can't assume something or hypostatically unite it to his divine nature if it isn't. But during the three days that Christ was dead—during that interim state—there was no human nature there to be assumed. And so, at least for those three days, the hypostatic union was not. But then, it follows that the hypostatic union is not permanent, and that the natures are

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[1] A reminder to the reader: I am still assuming the truth of Thomistic Multiple Incarnations here, as discussed in the Introduction, Section II.d.

separable, contrary to Conciliar Christology. Thus, there is a difficulty for Extended Conciliar Christology.

In this chapter I will present the above worry in a valid derivation. I will also provide some reasons for thinking that its premises are true, or, in some cases, reasons for thinking its premises are true, *given* the truth of Conciliar Christology. I then go on to provide and assess six replies to the argument.

II. CHRIST'S INTERIM STATE

Though the first seven ecumenical councils are, so far as I know, silent on what happened during Christ's interim state, other statements are not.[2] For instance, as I wrote above, the Apostles' Creed and the Athanasian Creed both claim that Christ "descended into hell." Ludwig Ott (1960, 192) notes a quotation from St Augustine (*Ep.* 164, 2, 3) as evidence for the universality of the belief in Christ's descent to the underworld: "Who other than the unbeliever can deny that Christ was in the underworld?" John Damascene, whom Aquinas cites (*ST* III q.50 a.3. sed contra) writes (*De Fide Orth.* iii): "Although Christ died as man, and His holy soul was separated from His spotless body, nevertheless His Godhead remained unseparated from both— from the soul, I mean, and from the body." Where Augustine shows his affirmation of the universal assent to Christ's descent, John of Damascus shows affirmation of the union remaining between the Godhead and the parts of the human nature, even in death.

The teaching of the descent into hell was proclaimed as dogma, at least for Catholic Christians, at the Fourth Lateran Council. That council, held in 1215, writes in its first Constitution, "On the catholic faith":

> Although he is immortal and unable to suffer according to his divinity, he was made capable of suffering and dying according to his humanity. Indeed, having suffered and died on the wood of the cross for the salvation of the human race, he descended to the underworld, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. He descended in the soul, rose in the flesh, and ascended in both.
>
> (Tanner 1990, 230)

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[2] There is one passage from the councils that one could cite. The 9th anathema against Origen from the 5th ecumenical council, the Second Council of Constantinople (553), mentions the descent into hell. There is scholarly debate, though, about whether those anathemas were in fact accepted at Second Constantinople. In fact, there is debate about whether they were even read there. Norman Tanner (1990, 105–6), for instance, does not include them in his two-volume collection of the decrees of the ecumenical councils. For more on this, see Richard Price's (2011) "The Second Council of Constantinople (553) and the Malleable Past."

As a final bit of evidence for the doctrine of the descent into hell, and with a bit more explanation of what the descent involved, the Catechism of the Council of Trent says:

> [W]e profess that immediately after the death of Christ His soul descended into hell, and dwelt there as long as His body remained in the tomb; and also that the one Person of Christ was at the same time in hell and in the sepulchre. Nor should this excite surprise; for, as we have already frequently said, although His soul was separated from His body, His Divinity was never parted from either His soul or His body.   (Catholic Church 1982, 62)

Here, in the previous two quotations from medieval Catholic councils, we see the descent into hell explicitly affirmed. We also see affirmed the claim that the Person was united to both the body and soul, even though the body and soul were not united.

Given these passages from later conciliar statements, and their support from earlier creeds and Christian doctors, I will suppose the truth of the following thesis:

> *Interim Union*:   In the interim state between the death and resurrection of Christ, the Word remained united to both the body and the soul, though the body and soul were not united to one another, the body remaining in the sepulcher and the soul descending into the underworld.

Let Interim Union be a thesis with which we extend Conciliar Christology. With such an extension, do we face a contradiction or incoherence in the view? In what follows, I will discuss a potential reason for thinking that there is a lurking contradiction here. In brief, it goes as follows. The hypostatic union is supposed to be between two natures. But the human nature is the union of body and soul, and that union does not exist in the three days between death and the resurrection.[3] How can that union be permanent, though, if one of the things united does not exist? One might as well try to shake hands with the present king of France. In Section III I present the argument. In Section IV I support its premises. In Section V I consider some responses to the argument.

III. THE ARGUMENT PRESENTED

The argument goes as follows, where, to remind the reader, "CHN" is a name for the concrete human nature that Christ assumed:

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[3] I will, following the tradition, refer to the three days that Christ was dead, even though there is debate about whether it is apt to say he was, in fact, dead three days.

1. The Word perma nently assumed whatever he assumed in the incarnation.
2. The Word assumed CHN in the incarnation.
3. During the Interim State, CHN did not exist.
4. All real relations, to be instantiated, require the existence of their relata.
5. Assumption is a real relation.[4]
6. Assumption requires the existence of its relata to be instantiated.   (From 4, 5.)
7. During the Interim State, CHN was not assumed. (From 2, 3, 6.)
8. It is false that the Word permanently assumed CHN in the incarnation.   (From 2, 7.)
9. The Word permanently assumed CHN in the incarnation.   (From 1, 2.)
10. Contradiction!   (From 8, 9.)

The final five steps, 6–10, are all derivations based on the initial five premises. Since those premises entail a contradiction, at least one of them must be false, or some inference in the argumentation must be awry.

I concede the derivations. Premise 4 tells us, in schematic format, that all A are B. Premise 5 tells us that assumption is an A. It follows that assumption is a B, as Step 6 says. Step 6, then, which tells us that assumption requires its relata to exist in order to be instantiated, along with the claims that one of its relata is CHN (2) and that CHN didn't exist at a certain time (3), straightforwardly entails, as Step 7 says, that when that relatum isn't, it isn't assumed. Since there was a time after its initial assumption at which CHN was not assumed, it follows that CHN was not *permanently* assumed, as Step 8 says. Given that the Word permanently assumes (1), and that he assumes CHN (2), it follows, as Step 9 says, that the Word permanently assumes CHN. But Step 8 straightforwardly contradicts Step 9, as Step 10 says. A contradiction follows. What should we think of the argument? Is there some reason to deny at least one of the premises? In Section IV I present support for those premises.

IV. THE PREMISES

The following five subsections present some justification for affirming the premises of the preceding argument. For the theological premises (that is, all

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[4] As I will make clear below, being assumed is a real relation for the thing assumed, but need not be for the assumer. Nevertheless, it is a real relation in one direction, and that is all that this premise requires.

but 4, which I take to be a non-theological claim) I will focus in particular on justification from dogmatic statements of confessional Christian bodies, early fathers, and later doctors, in particular, Thomas Aquinas.

IV.a. The Word Permanently Assumed Whatever He Assumed in the Incarnation

The hypostatic union is supposed to be a permanent union. In his third letter to Nestorius, which is part of the Conciliar Christology of the first seven ecumenical councils, Cyril of Alexandria claims that the union of natures is "unbreakable" (Tanner 1990, 55).[5] Monsignor Pohle (1913, 169), in his argumentation for the permanence of the union, cites a line from the Ethiopian Liturgy concerning the permanence of the union between the natures: "I believe that the Godhead has never even for an hour or for a moment been separated from the manhood." Likewise, Pohle (1913, 176) cites St John Chrysostom as saying "Christ put on our flesh not to put it off again but to keep it forever." Ott (1960, 151) says that the proposition "The Hypostatic Union will never cease" is a doctrine of the faith (*De Fide*), to be accepted as true by all Catholics.[6] Eastern Orthodox Christians affirm the permanence of the hypostatic union as well. As Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev (2012, 305) writes:

> The liturgical texts of the Orthodox Church repeatedly emphasize that neither during the passion, nor at the time of Christ's death, nor during the descent into Hades, did his divinity become separated from his humanity.[7]

I take these claims as evidence that both the Orthodox and Catholics view traditional Christology to include the claim that the hypostatic union is permanent.[8]

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[5] There is some scholarly discussion about whether this letter counts as part of Conciliar Christology, and, if it does, when it was officially accepted as such. For some discussion of this point, and related points concerning Cyril's other letters, see: Bellitto (2002, 23, 27), Denzinger (2002, 50, footnote 1), Graumann (2011, 36), Hardy (1954, 349), Kelly (2009, 44), Landon (1909a, 1:140, 200–1), Price (2009, 75, 85, 2011, esp. 120), Price and Whitby (2011, 11–22), Russell (2000, 35–9), Tanner (1990, 37–8), Weinandy (1985, 58), and Wesche (1997, 144).

[6] Though the theological note that Ott (1960, 150) attaches to the proposition "The Hypostatic Union was never interrupted" is only Sent. Certa (theologically certain), that grade of certainty still guarantees the truth of the proposition to which it is appended. Of course, the judgments of Ott are not themselves certain theological pronouncements, but they are a good, though defeasible, guide to what the Catholic Church teaches.

[7] For other discussions of the descent into the underworld, see Baker (2013, 113), Ott (1960, 191–5), and Pohle (1913, 169–74).

[8] For more citations to Fathers who thought the union was permanent, including Leo the Great and John Chrysostom, see de Aldama and Solano (2014, 91–3). But see also the teaching of James of Marshes, for instance, who understands this permanence differently, which will become

Aquinas argues (*ST* III q.50 a.2 resp.) that grace is never withdrawn without sin or fault. The grace of union, then, will never be withdrawn, since Christ does not in fact sin (and *could* not sin, according to Aquinas, as we will discuss later in Chapter 6). And so, once assumed, that which is assumed could not be unassumed.

I should note that this first premise is not modalized. It is not saying that if the Word assumes CHN in the actual world then the Word assumes CHN in every possible scenario. And it is not saying that it is necessary that the Word assume anything at all. Rather, it is saying that, given that the Word has assumed something, he does not, and will not, stop assuming that thing.

Also, I should note that even if someone thinks that the assumption will eventually end, or perhaps ended previously—say, at the ascension—there is still reason to believe that it continued through the *triduum mortis*, the three days of death between the culmination of the crucifixion and the resurrection on Easter Sunday. One reason to think that the assumption continues during those days is due to the continued propriety of the *communicatio idioma- tum*, discussed in Chapter 1, Section III. As Aquinas argues (*ST* III q.50 a.2 sed contra), idioms continue to transfer even after death. For Christ is rightly said to be in the tomb ("he suffered, died and *was buried*"), and Christ is rightly said to descend into hell, as we saw earlier. A necessary condition for these predications to be true in a literal sense, and not merely a figurative or metaphorical sense, is the continuation of the hypostatic union, since it is that union in virtue of which the communication of idioms is possible. And so, even after death, the hypostatic union remains. Thus, the formalized argument in Section III of this chapter will be germane even to those who deny the perpetuity of the assumption forever more, provided they affirm Interim Union.

important in the later discussion of Premise 1. He writes (Lightbown 2004, 168) "What Jacopo had in fact affirmed in his sermon was that Christ, after his death on the Cross, was no longer a man during his three days in the tomb because his divinity was separated from his humanity, but only in so far as humanity is the result of the union of body and soul, a union that is dissolved by death. This teaching was in perfect accord with that of the best theological doctors and more especially St Thomas Aquinas, who affirmed that, until his Resurrection, the union of body and soul in Christ had ceased at his death so that he was no longer a man, though he might legitimately be called a dead man. However, the union in him of the Word with body and soul had not ceased in the tomb, since it was the assumption by the Word of a united soul and body that made God a man and a man God. That assumption of a united soul and body had not been terminated by the separation in death of the soul and body, since the Word remained united to both, not in two hypostases, but in a single hypostasis as before. Accordingly, only Christ's human nature lost its totality, for neither the body nor the soul of Christ, though separated from each other for three days by his death on the Cross, was separated from the person of the Son of God." I thank Brandon Peterson for pointing this text out to me.

IV.b. The Word Assumed CHN in the Incarnation

As we saw in the previous section, there is good reason to think that the assumption is permanent. But what is it that is assumed? And what is it that does the assuming? In this section I will provide some evidence for the claim that the assumer is the Word, and the thing assumed is Christ's human nature.

As a first piece of evidence, drawn from the texts of Conciliar Christology, Cyril of Alexandria says, in a letter officially accepted by the Council of Ephesus:

> [W]e claim that the Word in an unspeakable, inconceivable manner united to himself hypostatically flesh enlivened by a rational soul, and so became man and was called son of Man, not by God's will alone or good pleasure, nor by the assumption of a person alone.   (Tanner 1990, 41)

Here it is the Word that does the assuming, not of a *person*, but of "flesh enlivened by a rational soul." The Council of Vienne (1311–12), an ecumenical council on the Catholic reckoning, says in its first decree:

> The only begotten Son of God . . . assumed in time in the womb of a virgin the parts of our nature united together, from which he himself true God became true man: namely the human, passible body and the intellectual or rational soul truly of itself and essentially informing the body.   (Tanner 1990, 360)

Here the assumer is the "only-begotten Son" and that which is assumed is "the parts of our nature united together" (*partes nostrae naturae simul unitas*). That union of body and soul is the human nature, as the Council of Vienne says, and as I have shown in Chapter 1, Section IV.b.

From these texts, and others like them, I find strong evidence for the premise in question here: that assumption is a relation between a person and a nature. But I should note that the language sometimes employed, as in the quotation from the Council of Vienne, makes it sound as if assumption holds between a person and the *parts* of a nature, and not between a person and the nature as a whole. In fact, later we will see a response to the argument capitalize on this understanding of assumption, and so provide a way of responding to the argument.

Whatever the hypostatic union is, it is a union that joins two natures together in such a way that whatever predicates would be made apt of the hypostases possessing those natures in a case where those two natures were not joined, would likewise be made apt of the assuming hypostasis. As Aquinas concludes, then, assumption holds between a person and a nature, whereas the hypostatic union holds between the natures belonging to the person (see *ST* III. q.2 a.8 resp.). No one who affirms Conciliar Christology will be able to give exact and metaphysically illuminating conditions for the hypostatic union, since the councils themselves call it mysterious and ineffable

(see Tanner 1990, 41, 72, 117). Happily, one needn't provide an analysis of the hypostatic union in order to claim both that it is permanent, and that it holds between two natures.

IV.c. During the Interim State, Christ's Human Nature Did Not Exist

Christ's human nature, according to the texts of the earliest ecumenical councils, is a concrete thing, composed of a body and a rational soul. I made the case for this claim earlier in Chapter 1, Section IV.b. To reiterate just a bit of the evidence offered there, Cyril is explicit in claiming that the nature is a flesh and soul composite, as are later councils. He often paraphrased the human nature hypostatically united to the divine nature as: "flesh enlivened by a rational soul" (41) and a "holy body rationally ensouled" (44). At death, according to the thesis I have called Interim Union, Christ's body and soul were separated. The flesh was not enlivened by a rational soul. The holy body was not rationally ensouled. There was no thing that we could rightly call "CHN" during that time.

 This view is Aquinas's as well. He writes (*ST* III q.50 a.4) that Christ is not a man during the three days of death.[9] Ludwig Ott (1960, 150) follows him on this point. For Christ was truly dead, and to be truly dead is to have one's soul separated from one's body. So, Christ's soul and body were separated during those days, as Interim Union has it. But a human nature is a union of body and soul according to Aquinas, who is following Cyril. Bonaventure affirms the same.[10] And so CHN did not exist during the three days. De Aldama and Solano (2014, 96) argue similarly.

IV.d. No Real Relations without Relata

Consider the distinction between real relations and relations of reason. Mark Henninger (1989, 7) provides a clear exposition of this distinction:

> [Aquinas] held that a relation R of *a* to *b* is real only if *a* and *b* are really distinct extra-mental things, and there is a real extra-mental foundation in *a* for R. Aquinas

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[9] For a good and careful discussion of Aquinas's views on Christ's death, and how those views relate to the debate between survivalist and corruptionist interpretations of Aquinas, see Nevitt (2016).

[10] Bonaventure (2005, 164): "when he died, even though his soul was separated from his body, the oneness of his person remained, and thus neither soul nor body was separated from his Godhead. Now since it is precisely the union of body and soul that makes a living human being, it follows that, during those three days, Christ was not a man, although both his soul and body were united to the Word." I thank Brandon Peterson for drawing my attention to this passage.

also held that a relation R of *a* to *b* is of reason only if either (i) *a* and/or *b* is not real, or (ii) *a* and *b* are not really distinct, or (iii) there is no real foundation in *a* for R.[11]

As the definition of the term shows, real relations require the existence and non-identity of their relata. While this is definitionally true, I don't mean this premise to rest merely on definition. We can see that, in general, in order for one thing to be related in a certain way to something else, that something else needs to exist. Try picking up the firstborn of your newborn infant. Try balancing transparent lead. Try deciphering the code for an encryption that I haven't yet invented. Try upholding a ball that isn't. These sound like tasks a Dr Seuss character would ask of an exasperated child. They aren't things that can be done, for no real relation can hold between two things, one of which isn't. The question to ask at this juncture is whether assumption is a real relation.

IV.e. Assumption is a Real Relation

Here one must be careful. For a relation can be real in one direction, so to speak, and not real in the other. For instance, the standard view among those who make this distinction between real and rational relations, and who allow for the possibility of real relations running in only one direction, is that while creation is really related to God, God is not really related to creation. One can see why this is. God and individual created things both exist and are distinct. But while there is a foundation for the createdness of a created being in that being, Aquinas and many others have argued that there is no foundation for its creation in its creator. There is something about created beings because of which it is true to say *something created it*, but on their view, it is false that there is something in God, some ontological bit, in virtue of which it is true to say that *God created something*. For my purposes, I need not take a stand on whether God is really related to creatures. I don't mean to settle any controversies here about whether God is really related to any creatures, but merely to illustrate what sort of thing we are talking about with a one-way relation.

There are various ways one might spell out this foundation or lack of foundation. It might be that the composition of act and potency requires some further thing to bring about that composition. That composition of act and potency is found in created things and can be the foundation for their real relation to their creator. But in God, at least given classical divine attributes, there is nothing "in" God that can stand as a foundation for God's being a

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[11] I thank Matthews Grant and Mark Spencer (2015, 12, 27) for drawing my attention to this passage. For more interesting theological work done by the distinction between real relations and relations of reason, see Spencer (2016, 2017).

creator. For, given divine simplicity, there is nothing "in" God that isn't God. But since God creates contingently, his creating cannot be due to anything "in" him, since then it would exist in any possible situation in which he exists, and it would follow that he would create in any situation in which he exists. That would contradict the contingency of creation. So, on this Thomistic view, the conditions are fulfilled for God's relation to creation to be rational, but creation's relation to God to be real.

Considering the relation of assumption, we can see that it, too, is real in at least one direction. Henninger doesn't give a sufficient condition for a relation's being real; rather, he notes necessary conditions. But it seems to me that we can treat his necessary conditions as jointly sufficient for the aptness of those concepts. If we do that, we can see that the human nature fulfills the conditions for being really related to the divine person in the assumption.

In fulfillment of the first condition, the person of the Word and CHN are both existent and they are distinct. We can show that they are distinct in the following way. There was a time before which CHN existed, but, in accordance with the anathema enshrined in the original Nicene Creed, there was no time before which the Word did not exist.[12] Thus, CHN and the Word must be distinct.

In fulfillment of the second condition for a relation's being real, there is a real extra-mental foundation for the hypostatic union in CHN. For, on a traditional view, held by Aquinas (*ST* III q.2 a.7 resp.), the hypostatic union is a created entity. Furthermore, it is, in some way, "in" CHN. Recall here that the union is a grace, and a grace is a quality of a soul, gifted to it by God (*ST* I-II q.110 a.2). Thus, there is a foundation for the assumption relation in CHN. So, the relation of assumption, at least in one direction, is a real relation. Put otherwise, CHN is really related to the Word. I will not discuss here whether the Word is really related to CHN. Taking a stand either way on that question is not a stand I need to take for defense of the premise in question.

At this point I have concluded giving the justification for the premises of the argument provided in Section III. In Section V, I go on to provide some responses to the argument, which focus on denying Premises 1, 2, or 3.

V. POTENTIAL RESPONSES TO THE ARGUMENT

In what follows I will discuss potential responses to the argument that focus on denying different premises. For myself, I can't see how a real relation can hold

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[12] "And those who say 'there once was when he was not' . . . affirming that the Son of God is subject to change or alteration—these the catholic and apostolic church anathematises" (Tanner 1990, 5).

between two things, one of which is not. This follows from the definition I gave in Section IV.d of real relations. But even aside from that, I don't see a feasible way of using the term "real relation" of a relation that holds between a thing and a nothing. This might be a conceptual blind spot in my philosophical vision. Be that as it may, I will give Premise 4 a pass. If the reader lacks this particular blind spot, the reader has yet another route open for arguing that the extension of Conciliar Christology formed by appending Interim Union to it survives this argument.

I do not see how Premise 5 could be false, either. Suppose (*per impossibile*, on the traditional Christian view) that the Son does not exist. In such a scenario, could it be true that the Son assumed CHN? I don't see how it could be. Were there no Son, there'd be no Son's assuming, either. To see the point in another way, suppose atheism is true and suppose we were going through the doctrinal statements of the church, crossing out the statements that are false, given atheism. For instance, we would need to cross out the claim that God is the creator of heaven and earth, since there is no God to be a creator, if atheism is true. Even if we view God as a mentally existing construct, or as the feeling of love, or as something else, *that* thing isn't what created the universe. We would not have to cross out the claims that Jesus suffered under Pontius Pilate or that Jesus died, just given atheism, but we would have to recognize that Jesus' death was not the death *of God*, since, again, there is no God to die. Now ask: would we have to cross out the claim that the Word assumed something in the incarnation? It seems to me that we would. For if there is no Word, I can see no sense to be given to that Word's assuming something.

Similarly, assume for argument's sake that the human nature of Christ never existed. Perhaps, in line with the thought of Arthur Drews's *The Christ Myth* (1998), we learn that there is indubitable evidence that the gospel writers and apostles made up the whole tale for some political reason. Or consider a situation in which God creates nothing at all, and so CHN is not created. Would it—could it—be true, in either case, to say that the Word assumed CHN? In neither case, it seems to me, is it true to say of CHN that it was assumed by the Word. For to be assumed requires, as a minimum necessary condition, the existence of the thing being assumed.

In the following sections, then, I will focus on Premises 1, 2, and 3. I will discuss them in reverse order.

V.a. Denying Premise 3

Premise 3 states that the human nature of Christ did not exist in the interim state. Depending on what one takes the human nature of Christ to be, one can provide different ways in which to deny this claim. I will discuss four such

ways in this section, drawing on and following the three options Aquinas briefly considers (*ST* III q.50 a.4) in response to a related question, ("Whether Christ was a man during the three days of his death"), and adding a fourth option from contemporary discussions of the interim state of mere humans.

First, one can take the human nature to be an abstract, universal thing. On such a view, the human nature of Christ is the same as the human nature of all other humans. It is a universal, shareable thing, which persisted through the three days of death. Call this the *Abstract Nature View*.

Second, one can take the human nature to be a concrete thing but take it to be just one part of the body and soul composite. Perhaps what was assumed was the body alone, or the soul alone. Since the body and the soul, according to Interim Union, each persisted through the interim state, the human nature did, too. Call this the *One Part View*.

Third, one can take the human nature to be a concrete thing and take it to include both a body and a soul but deny that it requires both a body and a soul *united to one another*. Since both the body and the soul continued in existence during the three days of death, and they were both united to the person of Christ, though not to each other, the nature persisted through the three days. Call this the *Mere Parts View*. (It or something very similar is often referred to as the *habitus* view.)

Fourth and finally, one can take the human nature to be a concrete thing that is constituted or composed by different metaphysical parts at different times. Perhaps the human person is constituted by the body and soul in union in life but is constituted by the soul alone in the interim state between death and the final resurrection. This view is called "Survivalism" in the contemporary literature. (Its chief foe is "corruptionism," the view that the person is constituted by the united body and soul essentially, and so, since the body and soul are not united between death and the final resurrection, the person is not—has corrupted—during that time.) As in the mundane human case, Christ's human nature might be constituted by the union of body and soul during life, but only by the soul during the interim state. Call this the *Survivalist View*. I will discuss these four views in turn.

V.a.1. The Abstract Nature View

Consider first the Abstract Nature View. On this view, the thing that the Word assumed is not, properly speaking, a flesh-and-blood entity. Rather, the thing that the Word assumed is a shareable thing, which you, too, have. As I defined the term in Chapter 1, Section IV.b:

The Abstract Nature View:	The human nature of Christ is a property or a complex of properties.

On the Abstract Nature View, it is false that Christ's human nature ceased existing during the three days of death. For there were still others who were human during those days—for instance, St John, or Mary *Theotokos*. But, on this view, St John is human just in case he participates in the abstract human nature. And no one can participate in something that isn't. So, the abstract human nature existed for those three days. Hence, Christ's human nature did not cease existing during those three days, contra Premise 3.

Against this view, recall the arguments in Chapter 1, Section IV.b against interpreting the human nature referred to in the councils as an abstract thing, which I called the Cyrillic and Leonine arguments. Cyril paraphrases the human nature as "flesh enlivened by a rational soul" and a "holy body rationally ensouled" (Tanner 1990, 41, 44). No abstract thing is properly paraphrased by either of those descriptions. Leo says that the human nature hung from the cross and was pierced.[13] But, again, no shareable, universal thing can hang on a cross or be pierced. I take these texts to preclude a reading of Conciliar Christology on which the nature that Christ assumed in the incarnation was an abstract, universal nature.[14]

Thus, while the Abstract Nature View does provide good reason to reject Premise 3, Conciliar Christology provides good reason to reject the Abstract Nature View.

V.a.2. The One Part View

Consider now the One Part View. On this view, the thing that the Word assumed is an individual human soul, or the merely material flesh (or body).

The One Part View: The human nature of Christ is either the body, or the soul, but not both.

On this view, it is false that Christ's human nature ceased existing during the three days of death. We can see this to be true, whichever part it is that we think was assumed. Suppose the soul is the human nature. The soul descended into the underworld during those days, as Interim Union states, and nothing

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[13] "[I]f he accepts the Christian faith and does not turn a deaf ear to the preaching of the gospel, let him consider what nature it was that hung, pierced with nails, on the wood of the cross" [*quae natura transfixa clavis pependerit in crucis ligno*] (Tanner 1990, 81).

[14] This is not to say that there is no such thing as a shareable, universal human nature. Perhaps there is such a thing. Other theological or philosophical considerations might require positing such a thing. But that thing is not the thing the conciliar fathers refer to when they speak of Christ's human nature that was assumed. And so, even if there were such a thing, it would not be relevant to this conversation.

can descend into anything if it doesn't exist to descend. And so, the soul continued existing. But the soul is the human nature, on this view. So, the human nature continued existing. Likewise, for the body: the body remained in existence during those three days, and so, by similar reasoning, it is false that CHN ceased existing, on this view.[15] Hence, Christ's human nature did not cease existing during those three days, contra Premise 3.

This view does better with the conciliar evidence than the Abstract view did. For on this view, we can make sense of the conciliar claims wherein the human nature is causally affected (e.g., "hung;" "pierced"). Nevertheless, this view has a hard time with other conciliar passages cited in Chapter 1, Section IV.b. It has to make sense of the paraphrases which the church fathers give for the assumed human nature. For the assumed human nature is called "flesh enlivened by a rational soul," and it is hard to see how a soul can be aptly described as "flesh enlivened by a rational soul." There are one too many souls in the picture if the nature is a soul which, itself, is flesh enlivened by a rational soul.

In addition, the One Part View on which the lone thing assumed is the body also runs into conciliar trouble. For the claim that Christ assumed a body without a rational soul is condemned under the name "Apollinarianism," a name derived from its most famous adherent. In neither way of understanding the One Part View, then, will the proponent of Conciliar Christology find a satisfactory response to the worry raised in this chapter.

Finally, the communication of idioms still works during the three days of death between both the body and the person and also between the soul and the person. Christ descended with the soul but remained in the tomb with the body. But if only one of those two parts were really united to the Person, the conditions for the communication of idioms would not be met with the other part, and so we couldn't truthfully say that Christ descended (if the body is the nature) or that Christ was buried (if the soul is the nature).

For these reasons, I do not see the One Part View as a viable response for the proponent of Conciliar Christology.

V.a.3. The Mere Parts View

Consider finally the Mere Parts View. On this view, the things the Word assumed are a body and a soul. That body and soul count as a human nature, whether they are united or not. Aquinas attributes this view to Peter Lombard.

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[15] How it is that the body could have continued existing is an interesting question, especially on hylomorphic theories of material reality. I will leave that question to one side here, though, because an answer to it is not necessary either for explaining the One Part View or for critiquing it.

It is the mere having of the body and soul that is sufficient for having a human nature and for being a human. One might put it as follows:

The Mere Parts View:	Something has a human nature when it has both an individual human soul and a human body, whether or not the body and soul are united.

On the Mere Parts View, it is false that Christ's human nature ceased existing at death. For the human nature is what something has when it has both a human body and soul, and Christ retained both his human body and soul during the three days of death. So, the human nature existed for those three days. Hence, Christ's human nature did not cease existing during those three days, contra Premise 3.

Of the three views presented in this section so far, this view does the best at squaring with the conciliar texts. For the things assumed, together, can be hung on a cross. And the things assumed, at the time of assumption, are aptly referred to by the words "flesh enlivened with a rational soul." Thus, the Mere Parts View does not run afoul of the texts provided above as contrary to the first two views.

There are some difficulties for this view, however. For one thing, what sort of thing is a human nature on this view? It is a thing that exists when something else has both a body and soul, whether or not they are united. When body and soul are separate, though, what sort of thing is that nature? It is not an animal, for the animal is dead. Is it a substance? If a substance, then, when Christ was alive, were there two created substances there—the human nature, which is there whether or not the two are united *and* the animal, which is only there when they are united?[16] Perhaps the assumed human nature isn't a substance. But then what sort of thing would the nature be such that it is concrete, can hang on a cross, and can be paraphrased, at least at the moment of incarnation, as "flesh enlivened by a rational soul?"

This third view has the benefit of not running afoul of the conciliar texts. But it has the drawback of requiring much more metaphysical work to show what sort of thing the nature could be.

V.a.4. The Survivalist View

The fourth and final view I will consider in this section is based on the school of thought concerning the interim state called survivalism.[17] Many of its

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[16] Perhaps there were three substances, if we include the divine nature in the count.
[17] I thank T. Ryan Byerly for raising this option at the Interim State Writing Workshop in McCall Idaho, in 2015.

proponents claim the following is true.[18] During life, humans are composed of two metaphysical parts. During the interim state, those humans continue existing (they survive, hence the name), but they only have one of those metaphysical parts—the soul. Then, at the resurrection, they again get the other metaphysical part back—the body. (Survivalists are free to say that the soul isn't the *only* part of the person during the interim state. For instance, they may claim that properties, such as accidents or tropes, are parts of the person. In what follows I mean to be neutral with respect to whether the human nature has the soul as its *only* part during the interim state, or whether other things besides the body count as ontological parts during that time as well.) One might put an analogous claim about Christ as follows:

> *The Survivalist View*:   The human nature of Christ is composed of the united body and soul in life; in the interim state it is composed of the soul without the body.

On the Survivalist View, it is false that Christ's human nature ceased existing at death. For the soul continues to exist in that state, and in that state, it, perhaps with other things distinct from the body, composes the nature, so the nature exists. Hence, Christ's human nature did not cease existing during those three days, contra Premise 3.

This view squares with the conciliar texts cited previously. The predicates applied to CHN by the conciliar texts are applicable to the nature as represented on the Survivalist View. And the paraphrases are apt, too; the Word did assume flesh enlivened with a rational soul—that's what the nature was composed of at the time of assumption. Moreover, we don't have the too-many-substances problem the Mere Parts View faced. For those problems arose when considering what sort of thing the disjoint nature could be. For the Survivalist View, though, there is no disjoint nature. In death the soul composes the nature, and it is unified, not disjoint.

The view does not fare as well, however, when we consider other objections the previous views faced. For instance, the communication of idioms continues during the interim state from the soul (hence we can say that Christ descended) *but also from the body* (hence we can say that Christ is in the tomb). But if the hypostatic union is between natures, and after death the body is not part of the nature, how could it be that the predicates from the body transfer to the person of the Word?

Perhaps the beginning of the response to this objection would be to point out some other, unique relation, that the person of the Word could bear to the

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[18] For some discussion of survivalism and its rival, corruptionism, see Eberl (2009), Nevitt (2014, 2016), Stump (1995, 2005, 50–4, 2006, 2011) Toner (2009, 2010, 2012a, 2012b). For a helpful listing of other authors who discuss these issues, see Nevitt (2016), especially footnotes 2 and 3.

body at that time, such that the predicates apt of the body can still be communicated to the Word. In such a case, the Word would have a human nature (just the soul, at this point), and also be aptly predicated by the predicates true of the body. The foregoing, though, is merely a sketch. There is still more work to be done for the proponent of the survivalist view.

V.a.5. Summary of the Problems for these Responses

All four of the responses discussed in Sections V.a.1 through V.a.4 need to face a common set of objections. Do they allow us to make sense of the things the councils say of the assumed human nature of Christ? The Abstract View and the One Part View have a difficult time responding to this objection. Do they allow us to have an account of what a nature is? The Mere Parts view has a difficult time responding to this objection. Do they allow us to retain the communication of idioms throughout the three days of death? The Abstract View, the One Part View, and the Survivalist View all have some difficulty with the predications still apt of the Word during the three days of death. Each of the views discussed in the subsections of V.a, then, face challenges. In Section V.b, I will discuss a means by which to deny Premise 2.

V.b. Denying Premise 2

The view I have in mind in this section grants Premise 3 but denies Premise 2. So, it grants that CHN did go out of existence during the three days of Christ's death. This is Aquinas's view in his *Summa Theologiae* III, question 50, article 4, where he considers whether Christ is a man during the three days of death. He answers that Christ is not a man. One reason for this view, similar, but not identical to, his argumentation in that article's *respondeo* goes as follows. To be a man is to have a human nature. And to have a human nature is to have a body and soul united together. But during those days Christ is dead. And to die is to have one's soul and body separated. Thus, Christ did not have a body and soul united together. And so, he did not have a human nature at that time. There was no human nature to be had, as Premise 3 notes.[19]

What, then, is the proper subject of assumption if it is not, as Premise 2 states, a human nature? And whatever that proper subject of assumption is, how can one provide an interpretation of the conciliar texts on which that proper subject is the thing assumed?

Here's one view, influenced by a text from Aquinas (*ST* III. q.50 a.4 ad.1). The Son's taking up of body and soul is permanent. And so those two parts

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[19] We find similar reasoning in de Aldama and Solano (2014, 96).

remain taken up by him, even in the interim state. But having those two parts is insufficient for being a man. One must have those two parts and *have them joined correctly* to be a man. So, in the interim state Christ isn't a man, as we've seen Aquinas and Ott claim (along with Bonaventure, James of Marshes (see footnote 8 of this chapter), de Aldama and Solano, and Pohle). While there is a permanent addition, it is not the permanent addition of a human nature, but rather of the parts of the human nature.

We might modify Premise 2, then, denying how it is initially put, but affirming it in this new formulation:

2*.   The Word assumed *the component parts of* CHN in the incarnation.

Provided that the component parts continue to exist during Christ's interim state, they can remain assumed during that time. Interim Union guarantees that those component parts continue to exist during the interim state, so the person facing the argument in Section III already has reason to affirm the continued existence of the component parts and their union to the Word during those days.

The modified Premise 2, along with Premise 1, does *not* yield Step 9. Thus, the proponent of this solution can claim that while Step 8 still follows from the preceding lines, a contradiction is not derived. Thus, the problem is avoided.

Letting "A" stand for the relation of assumption, and letting "w," "b," and "s" name the Word, Christ's body, and Christ's soul, respectively, we can depict the relation this solution suggests as follows: $A(w,(b,s))$. This says that the Word assumes the body and the soul. And we can depict Christ's human nature as the union of b and s as follows, where the ampersand represents the union of body and soul, and not the logical conjunctive connective: $b\&s$. During Christ's interim state, $b\&s$ does not exist, while $A(w,(b,s))$ continues.

In response to the previous attempted solutions to the problem, I have asked how the solution fits with the teachings of Conciliar Christology, the later conciliar claims, and the teachings of authoritative theologians throughout the centuries. Here we ought to ask the same about this attempted solution. Consider the paraphrastic problems the earlier solutions faced. Can the thing assumed still be referred to as a nature, or as "flesh enlivened by a rational soul" if the things *really* assumed are the component parts? I think the answer here is "yes."

An analogy may be helpful. Suppose I have a simple light, composed of a battery and a bulb. The bulb has component parts, including two short wires to connect to the terminals of the battery. Now, suppose that at the first moment at which the bulb and the battery are put together to compose a whole, call it a "light," I pick up the light and hold it in my hand. In such a case, we may truthfully say that I'm holding up the light. And we might say, metaphorically, that the light being held up is a circuit enlivened by a new battery. I may pick up the light by grabbing the battery with one hand, and the

bulb with the other, and lifting the whole contraption. In such a case, what I hold up is a light, and the means by which I hold it up is by holding up its component parts—the bulb and the battery.

Likewise, we might say that the Word assumes by taking up the component parts. But it is nevertheless true to say that what is assumed is the nature, just as it is true to say that what is upheld is the light. And since at the moment of assumption those component parts are arranged such that they aptly are referred to as "flesh enlivened by a rational soul," it is not false to say that what Christ assumed was flesh enlivened by a rational soul. Though, if pressed, the mechanics will make it clear that the thing(s) assumed, more strictly speaking, are the component parts.

Moreover, if we look back at the quotations marshaled as evidence throughout this book, and, in particular, throughout this chapter, we can see some reason for thinking that the parts are, properly speaking, the things assumed. For instance, look at the quotation from the Council of Vienne in Section IV.b above, where the conciliar fathers say that the Son "assumed in time in the womb of a virgin *the parts of our nature united together*." And Ott writes (1960, 151), "Even after their separation the body and soul remained hypostatically united with the Divine Logos." Thus, I do not take the view offered in this section to be contrary to the traditional Christological teaching, and, in fact, I see some motivation for this view from important doctrinal texts.

Earlier, I defined assumption as holding between a person and a nature. The proponent of the view put forward in this section will need to revise this claim in one of various ways. She could say that we can speak of derivative and non-derivative assumptions. The Word non-derivatively assumes the parts of the nature, but, in assuming them, derivatively assumes the nature. In that case, it is true to say that the nature is assumed, in a certain way of speaking. Or she might just deny the earlier explication of assumption, noting that assumption only *really* holds between persons, on the one hand, and parts of natures, on the other. Or she might make the understanding of assumption disjunctive. Assumption is a relation that holds *either* between a person and a nature *or* between a person and the parts of a nature. Any of these three modifications would do the work the proponent needs.

One worry about this view is that we don't find the language of assumption holding between a person and the *parts* of a nature very often in the tradition. That might give us some reason to pause in our acceptance of the view. I've tried to mitigate this worry by pointing to places where we do find this way of speaking explicitly in the tradition.

A second worry, plausible at first, but misguided, I think, is to claim that this solution is equivalent to the Mere Parts solution discussed earlier. While they have surface similarities, they have different entailments, and so cannot be equivalent. The Mere Parts view implies that Christ's human nature continues to exist in the interim state; the view under discussion here denies that claim.

The view under discussion here requires a modification in the understanding of the relata of assumption; the Mere Parts view does not. And so, while the view under discussion here and the Mere Parts view have surface similarities, their having contradictory entailments itself entails that they are not the same view.

A third worry one might have derives from my reliance on Aquinas. For he also asked whether the human nature was assumed through the medium of its parts, and he answered "no" (*ST* III q.6 a.5). Isn't he, then, explicitly denying the view on offer here? I think not. In that question, he distinguishes between priority of an agent (in particular, its intent) and priority of the matter. His answer is that, in the order of agential intent, the whole is assumed prior to its parts. This is a reasonable view; the reason why the Son chose to assume *this* body and *this* soul is because he wanted to assume *this* human nature. The agent's intention of assuming this nature was prior to the intention of assuming this body or soul. What of priority of matter? Here we see that, for Aquinas, the order is reversed.

Aquinas considers a passage from Augustine in the first objection against the view that the whole is assumed prior to the parts. The passage goes as follows:

> [T]he invisible and unchangeable Truth assumed the soul through the medium of the spirit, and the body through the medium of the soul, and in this way the whole man.   (*ST* III q.6 a.5 ob.1, quoting from *De Agone Christ.* xviii)

Here Augustine seems to be saying that the body is assumed through the intermediary of the soul, which Aquinas takes to imply that the parts were the medium through which the whole was assumed. In response, Aquinas writes,

> From these words nothing may be gathered, except that the Word, by assuming the parts of the human nature, assumed the whole human nature. And thus the assumption of parts is prior in the order of the intellect, if we consider the operation, but not in the order of time . . .   (*ST* III q.6 a.5 ad.1)

Here we see Aquinas explicitly claim, following Augustine, that through the assumption of the parts of the nature, Christ assumed the whole nature. That's the view on offer in this section. Thus, I deny that the view is contrary to the thought of Aquinas.[20] In fact, I think the question pointed at as evidence for the contrariety between this view and Aquinas's in fact, on a proper reading, supports the view offered in this section. When de Aldama and Solano consider Christ in the interim state, they claim that the assumption was

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[20] I hasten to add: if the view were contrary to St Thomas's view, this would not be a problem for my goal in this book. For my goal is to show the extensions of Conciliar Christology that I consider are not inconsistent. That project can be accomplished, even if one contradicts the thought of Aquinas. Really; I mean it.

through the parts, and the soul first. They refer to the same question from Aquinas as evidence for their claims (de Aldama and Solano 2014, 87–8; 93).

A final worry has to do with whether Christ can count as homoousios with us during his interim state. That is, during the three days of death, when, on this account, Christ's human nature did not exist, is it still apt to say of him that he is a human, or that he is one with us with respect to our humanity? If not, isn't that a problem?[21]

One response to this fourth worry is to grant that, during those three days of death, he was not homoousios with us. To be one in substance with us requires having a substance of the same type as we have; during those three days, he didn't have such a thing. Thus, he was not homoousios with us during those days.[22] This response, then, is a response that denies that there's anything there to worry about.

A second response would be to follow Scheeban's work:

> [A]lthough His body and soul were separated from one another, they both remained united to the Divine Person. Even after death Christ possessed a body and a soul, and thus was still man in a fuller sense than the other dead. The Person of Christ was at the same time in Limbo and in the sepulcher; yet all that belongs to His Person was in neither place.   (Wilhelm and Scannell 1901, 2:176–7)

Here the language of "still man in a fuller sense than the other dead" leads me to think that Scheeban is looking for middle ground between the sense in which living humans are human (the most robust sense) and the sense in which the other dead are human (the least full sense). Such a theory, if worked out, might allow for a gradation view whereby being a human—and so being one in substance with other humans—admits of degrees. Christ when dead can be human to a high enough degree to count as being one in substance with us, though not so high a degree that it requires the existence of his concrete human nature. I will not here attempt to work this response out. I prefer the first response.

V.c. Denying Premise 1

A final response to the problem is to deny Premise 1, or to understand it in a revised sense. When we say, as we do in Premise 1, that the Word permanently assumed whatever he assumed in the incarnation, we don't mean "permanently" in the sense that the assumed thing is assumed at every time thereafter. Rather, perhaps, "permanently" should be understood as saying that it will never be the case, after the first moment of the incarnation, that CHN both

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[21] I thank Ian McFarland for raising this question.
[22] See Section IV.c above for some discussion of Aquinas and Bonaventure on this topic.

(i) exists and (ii) is not assumed. Likewise, to say, as Chalcedon does, that the two natures are inseparable, is to say that any time at which they both exist, they will be united to one another.

If we could understand the permanence of the assumption in the way spelled out in the previous paragraph, then we could deny that:

2. The Word assumed CHN in the incarnation.

and

7. During the Interim State, CHN was not assumed.

imply

8. It is false that the Word permanently assumed   (From 2, 7.)
   CHN in the incarnation.

For this inference requires the word "permanently" to imply "at every point thereafter." But the understanding of permanence on display in this response does not carry such an implication. Provided that CHN does not exist during the Interim State, as Premise 3 explicitly says, the conditions for permanent assumption are not precluded. For, permanent assumption, on this view, requires it never to be the case, after the assumption occurs, that CHN both exist and not be assumed. CHN's non-existence during the interim state, then, rules out the first conjunctive condition for a denial of permanence to be satisfied. In short: on this understanding of permanence, 8 does not follow from 2 and 7, and hence the alleged contradiction at step 10 (from 8 and 9) is not derived.

This view has some benefits to it. It does not run afoul of the conciliar texts cited against the theories that deny Premise 3. For this view has no problem claiming that the nature is flesh enlivened by a rational soul, or that the nature hung on the cross. Moreover, this view need not revise our understanding of what the nature is, as some responses, for instance, the Mere Parts response, had to.

Does it require a revision of our understanding of assumption, as the response to Premise 2 did? Perhaps it does. For, the communication of idioms in the interim state remains. And that communication, as noted above, is ontologically undergirded by the hypostatic union. But, on this view, there is no hypostatic union of two natures in one person in the Interim State, since the human nature does not exist. How, then, can the communication of idioms continue? There must be some other sort of relation that holds between the parts of the human nature, which remain in existence, and the divine nature, such that the predicates transfer to the divine person of the Word. But then we have a second relation required for this view, very much like the relation of assumption, which holds not between the human nature and the divine person, but between the separated parts of the human nature

and the divine person. Perhaps adding a second relation is not a problem. After all, the quotation from the Catechism of the Council of Trent in Section II seems to require a sort of union between the Word and the parts of the nature in the interim state. That sort of union, it could be argued, requires a second relation, and so this response to the problem does not require anything that many wouldn't already be committed to positing. We should note, though, that if one is inclined to add a second relation to undergird the communication of idioms between the parts of the assumed nature and the person of the Word, the views that I have previously listed as running afoul of the communication of idioms could also do such a thing. Also, why add a novel relation when there is a way to understand assumption, the way spelled out in Section V.b, on which we do not need a new relation to explain the continued communication of idioms?

Another cost for this view is the fact that it sits uneasily with the historical documents I marshalled in favor of Premise 1. For instance, the quotation from Alfeyev, which explicitly stated that the humanity and divinity were not parted *even when he was dead, and even when he descended into Hades*, or the quotation from the Ethiopian liturgy. If the humanity is the human nature, then how can this view make sense of this denial of separation during the interim state? For, on this view, there is no human nature there to be unseparated from the divinity.

VI. CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have provided a difficulty for Conciliar Christology when conjoined with the Interim Union thesis. That difficulty begins with an assumption of something not found in Conciliar Christology proper, but which is found in other important, early Christian sources and creeds—the descent of Christ into hell during the three days of death. I defined this assumption and named it Interim Union. I then formalized an argument that is problematic for extending Conciliar Christology with Interim Union. Next, I supported its premises—that is, I gave reasons why a proponent of Conciliar Christology would grant them. Finally, I provided six responses to the argument. Two of the responses strike me as feasible—the denial of Premise 2 and the denial of Premise 1. Each faces some costs, which I presented in the relevant sections.

Part 2

Volitional Extensions

5

The Freedom of Christ

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins Part 2 of this book. Part 1 discussed extensions to Conciliar Christology that focused on the natures of Christ. Could the Word—or the other persons of the Trinity—become incarnate in multiple natures, or multiple times, or jointly incarnate in a single nature? Did the human nature that the Word in fact assumed cease to exist at death, and, if so, does that cause problems for the inseparability of the divine and human natures in the incarnation, or for the permanence of assumption?

In this second part of the book, I focus on extensions to Conciliar Christology, not primarily about natures, but about *wills*. According to Conciliar Christology, Christ has two wills—one divine, one human. I've considered arguments against the thesis that Christ is one person with two wills in *In Defense of Conciliar Christology*, wherein I argued against arguments which employ or imply a claim I dubbed the "Person-Will Conditional":

| *The Person-Will Conditional*: | If Christ is (only) one person, then Christ has (only) one will. (Pawl 2016e, 212) |

In this part of the present book, I will focus instead on two extensions to Conciliar Christology, two additions to the claims of Conciliar Christology. The first, which I discuss in this chapter, is the claim that Christ's wills were free, or that Christ was free with respect to both his divine and human will (how we state the claim depends on whether we primarily predicate freedom to wills or to the persons who have those wills). In the next chapter, Chapter 6, I discuss the extension which states that Christ was unable to will anything sinful, that is, that Christ was impeccable.

These two extensions are logically independent. For it could be that Christ is free with respect to both wills (so the first extension is true) but he is able to will sin with respect to one of them (so the second extension is false). One might think this if one thinks, as some claim, that true freedom of the human will *requires* the ability to sin. Likewise, it could be that Christ is not free with respect to at least one of his wills (so the first extension is false) but he is unable

to sin with respect to either of them (and so the second extension is true). One might think this if one thinks that the human nature was not free, due to divine determination, that the divine will cannot will sin, and that the divine will would not allow the human will to will sin.

The question I raise in this chapter is whether Christ's human will could be free, given Conciliar Christology.[1] There is some reason—in particular, a conciliar text—that might lead one to believe that his human will was not free. I argue that there is a reasonable understanding of the text such that Conciliar Christology, by itself, does not rule out the possibility of Christ's human will being free (or the possibility of Christ being free with respect to his human will, or however one wants to word the issue).

In what follows, first, in Section II, I present some reason for thinking that the freedom of Christ's human will is a traditional Christological view. I then, in Section III, say a little about what I mean when speaking of freedom. Finally, in Section IV, I present the conciliar text which leads to the problems, a formalized argument for the falsity of the extension of Conciliar Christology that includes the claim that Christ's human will was free, and, finally, a response to that argument. I conclude that Conciliar Christology and the freedom of Christ's human will are not incompatible, or, at least, not incompatible for the reasons considered in this chapter.

II. THE CREATED WILL OF CHRIST
AND ITS FREEDOM

While it is not itself a teaching of Conciliar Christology, the view that Christ's human will was free is certainly a common claim in church history. There are at least three reasons a traditionally-minded Christian will want to affirm that Christ's human will was free.

First, Christians often want to claim of Christ that he was like us mere humans in all ways but sin. In fact, the Exposition of faith from the Third Council of Constantinople claims of Christ that he "became a man like us in all things but sin" (Tanner 1990, 124). And scripture says:

> For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses,
> but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning.
> (Heb. 4:15, RSV)

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[1] For other discussions of whether traditional Christology (not necessarily Conciliar Christology) has a difficulty with claiming that Christ is free, see Arendzen (1941, chap. 3), Flint (2001a), Gaine (2015b, chap. 7), Hebblethwaite (2008, 68), Hick (1989, 442, 2006, 56), Kereszty (2002, 392–6), McFarland (2007), McKinley (2015), Morris (1987, 153), Rahner (1966, 202–3, 213–15), Rogers (2016), and Sturch (1991, 29, 167).

One thing we find important about us—one of the most important things about us—is the freedom of our human wills.[2] Thus, claiming that Christ's human will was unfree runs counter to the desire to claim him to be like us in all things but sin.

 Second, while Conciliar Christology does not include the claim that Christ is free with respect to his human will, other important early councils do assert the freedom of his human will. For instance, a Lateran Council in 649 includes:

> Canon 10: "If anyone does not properly and truly confess according to the holy Fathers two wills of one and the same Christ our God, united uninterruptedly, divine and human, and on this account that through each of His natures the same one of His *own free will* is the operator of our salvation, let him be condemned."
> (Denzinger 2002, para. 263)[3]

Here, we see the council claiming that Christians must confess that Christ had two wills, and that through each of those wills of his own free will he operated for our salvation. Thus, if one desires for one's Christology to remain consonant with the early, important councils of the church—even the non-ecumenical councils—it is desirable to affirm the freedom of Christ's human will.

 Third, the claim that Christ's human will was free is found in the tradition of the church in the thought of many of its most important theologians. Alfeyev (2012, 301), before chronicling evidence for the claim through the early Eastern theologians and liturgical sources, writes, "The combination of free will with complete obedience was a consequence of Christ's human will and his human energy being fully deified." Alfeyev presents it as a teaching of the early Orthodox theologians that Christ had a human will that was free. We can find something similar in early western theologians, too. Han-luen Kantzer Komline (2012, 54) writes of "the free graced obedience of Christ's human will" in the thought of Augustine. Finally, we find it in the important, later work of St John of Damascus, who writes in his Exposition of the Orthodox Faith (Book 3, chapter 13):

> Confessing, then, the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, to be perfect God and perfect man, we hold that the same has all the attributes of the Father save that of being ingenerate, and all the attributes of the first Adam [including]...two natural volitions, one divine and one human, two natural energies, one divine and one human, two natural free-wills, one divine and one human, and two kinds of wisdom and knowledge, one divine and one human.   (Willis and Rouët de Journel 2002, 323)

Here the Damascene is explicit that Christ has two volitions and two free wills, one of them being a human will.[4]

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 [2] See the discussion of "would you rather" in Chapter 8, Section III.c for more on this.
 [3] Price (2017) has translated the Acts of this synod.
 [4] Interestingly enough, one can find other passages in which it appears that the Damascene *denied* the freedom of Christ's human will. For instance, Alfeyev writes, "It is impossible to speak

One can find similar teaching in the western, medieval theologians. Aquinas, for instance, writes:

> [B]y a certain dispensation the Son of God before His Passion *allowed His flesh to do and suffer what belonged to it*. And in like manner He allowed all the powers of His soul to do what belonged to them.
>
> <div align="right">(<i>ST</i> III q.18 a.5 resp., emphasis in the original)</div>

Aquinas also writes:

> [T]he perfection of the divine nature includes having will (this was shown in Book I); similarly, also, the perfection of human nature includes having a will by which a man has free choice.   (*Summa Contra Gentiles* IV. 36.3)[5]

Ludwig Ott writes:

> From the dogma that Christ possesses a true human will there emerges as a theological conclusion, that Christ's human will is free. The libertas contrarietatis, that is, a freedom to choose between good and evil must however, be denied, because He, as a divine person, cannot be the subject of sin.   (Ott 1960, 148)

De Aldama and Solano (2014, 193–212) likewise argue that Christ's human will was free.

Contemporary thinkers, too, affirm the freedom of Christ with respect to his human will.[6] Kereszty writes, "From revelation we know that Jesus had a free human will, and that his life was a series of free decisions by his human will" (Kereszty 2002, 393). Thus, there are at least three reasons why the traditionally minded might desire to affirm the freedom of the human will of Christ.[7]

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of free choice in the Lord, claims John of Damascus (again following after Maximus), for free choice is a decision made on the basis of exploration and consideration of this or that subject, after conferring with and judging it. Christ, then, being not merely man, but God at the same time, and being omniscient, had no need either for 'considerations or exploration, for conferring or judging': he, by nature, was inclined to good and refused evil." The idea here seems to be the following: a necessary condition for free choice is exploration, consideration, and conferring judgment on which of the viable options is the best. But Christ, being omniscient, couldn't fulfill that necessary condition. And so he could not choose freely. This passage is relevant to another topic, in Chapter 8, where I discuss a thesis I call Certainty Precludes Deliberation. See Chapter 8, Section V.e. For more discussion of the view of John compared to that of Aquinas, see White (2016, 253).

[5] I came across this reference in Corey Barnes's (2006) doctoral dissertation. This translation is by Charles O'Neil (Aquinas 1989). For a good discussion of Aquinas's thoughts on the wills of Christ, see Barnes (2012).

[6] See, for instance, McKinley (2015), Moloney (2009), Morris (1987, 153), Rahner (1966, 202–3, 213–15), and Sturch (1991, 167).

[7] For more on this point, see Arendzen (1941, 181–4) and Pohle (1913, 213, 217–24).

We can define the thesis in question as follows:

The Human Freedom Thesis:	Christ, by virtue of his assumed human will, was free.

Again, there might be quibbles with the wording of the Human Freedom Thesis. Perhaps it is better to say that Christ's human will is free, or that Christ is free in his human will, or that Christ acted freely when performing acts of willing that originated in his human nature by means of his human will, or etc. However one chooses to word it, though, I hope the point to be sufficiently clear. It is the Human Freedom Thesis that I will append to Conciliar Christology to form the Extended Conciliar Christology which I will discuss in this chapter.

In what follows, I will be discussing the will and intellect that Christ had via his human nature unless I explicitly state otherwise. Section III discusses the consistency of the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the Human Freedom Thesis. For the time being, I will focus on Christ's human will without assuming anything about the scope of his human knowledge. In the third and final part of this book, the part on intellectual extensions, I will consider whether a strong view of Christ's human knowledge causes other problems for his freedom. I put off such questions now, since I don't want to make an additional intellectual assumption when discussing this problem. Since, as I said in the Introduction (Section II.d), I will include previous extensions in my discussion of subsequent extensions, the question of Christ's freedom, in light of the scope of his knowledge, will come up again, specifically in Chapter 8.

There are other problems with respect to Christ's freedom that will need to wait for discussion until later extensions. For instance, some argue that the ability to sin is a necessary condition for freedom. This claim, alone, is not a problem for the extension under discussion in this chapter. We must add to it the claim that Christ was not able to sin in order, by Modus Tollens, to derive that Christ was not free. That added claim is the focus of Chapter 6, and so discussion of this argument will wait until then. Similarly, for other objections to Christ's freedom based on later extensions (e.g., the extension discussed in Chapters 7 and 8, that Christ, by means of his human intellect, knew all things, past, present, and future).

III. FREE WILL

The literature on free will is immense, with a number of competing accounts of its exact nature. For those not familiar with this literature, it may come as a surprise how contentious the nature of free will is. Peter van Inwagen, one of the most influential figures in contemporary free will debates, argues that the

term "free will" should be defined[8] in terms of the ability to do otherwise. According to van Inwagen free will just *is*

> hav[ing] both the following abilities: the ability to perform that act and the ability to refrain from performing that act. (This entails that we have been in the following position: for something we did do, we were at some point prior to our doing it able to refrain from doing it, able not to do it.)   (2008, 329)

Yet others (Vargas 2007; McKenna 2008, 30; Timpe 2012b, 9–10) deny this and prefer to define free will in terms of the control condition on moral responsibility—that is, they think that having free will just is controlling your actions in the way required to be morally responsible for those actions. Others take these two understandings of free will to be coextensive; see, for example, Kane (2001, 17). Yet others think that they can come apart; see, for example, Fischer and Ravizza (1998).

 Following the work of Kevin Timpe (2012b, 2015b, chap. 2; Jenson and Timpe 2015), for present purposes, I stipulate the following definition of free will:

> *Free will* $=_{df}$ the set of capacities an agent has which allow her to control her volitions, the exercise of which is necessary for the agent to be morally responsible for those volitions.[9]

We need not, for present purposes, spell out the entire range of capacities involved. It is important that free will be understood as consisting in the capacities of an *agent* in virtue of her having those capacities, and not simply a function of one of those capacities in isolation from the others. As Leftow (2011b, 35) says in a recent article on the incarnation, "Decisions and volitions belong to those who make them." Agents make volitions in virtue of their rational faculties, much as it is agents that see in virtue of their eyes, optic nerves, and relevant portions of their brains. As Aquinas says:

> the operation of the parts is through each part attributed to the whole. For we say that man sees with the eye, and feels with the hand, and not in the same sense as when we say that what is hot gives heat by its heat; for heat, strictly speaking, does not give heat. We may therefore say that the soul understands, as the eye sees; but it is more correct to say that man understands through the soul.   (*ST* I q.75 a.2 ad.2)[10]

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[8] Actually, this isn't quite correct; what van Inwagen defines is not free will but the "free will thesis." Van Inwagen 2008 advises that one "define sentences, not terms" (328).

[9] Given the interaction of the intellect and will in free will, it may be that this formulation is too general. In talking about the set of capacities needed for a volition, I in particular have in mind the act of volition that Aquinas called "use", which is "an act of will to exercise control over one of the things subject to the will, for example, a part of the body, the intellect, or the will itself" (Stump 2005, 290). There are other acts of will that are involved in the exercise of free choice that occur logically prior to use.

[10] Gaine (2015b, 44) makes a similar point.

That said, while I agree that it is more apt to say of the agent that he is free than to say of his faculty that it is free, I will consider, in what follows, the entailments of viewing the faculty, not the person, as primarily free.

Finally, I will assume the truth of incompatibilism, the thesis that the truth of determinism is incompatible with our having freedom of the will. I do this, in a sense, as a favor to my opponent. If compatibilism were true, then one would be able to reconcile the freedom of Christ's human will with the divine determination of that will very easily. We could let the divine moving of the human will be as strong as determinism, and yet, given compatibilism, that would not imply that Christ is not free. So, to give the opponent some traction, I will be assuming the truth of incompatibilism.

Likewise, if compatibilism were true, the problem in the next chapter, concerning Christ's impeccability, would also be easy to resolve. If God were to determine that CHN never sins despite being free and tempted (or, put in a different way, that the Son never acts sinfully by means of his human nature), then we have the human freedom of Christ, the temptation of Christ, and the sinlessness of the Incarnate Christ, all without any heavy metaphysical lifting. In a similar way, if compatibilism were true, then the worrisome logical determination that might result from Christ's foreknowing in his human intellect all the future free actions of any agents would dissipate. For Christ's foreknowing, even if it determined the later actions of agents, wouldn't for that reason preclude their being free, given the truth of compatibilism.

To put the content of the previous two paragraphs otherwise, were compatibilism true, then the remaining difficulties for Fully Extended Conciliar Christology which I go on to discuss are easily answered. They are no difficulties at all. This may well be welcome news to the compatibilist, as she has built-in answers to the arguments I go on to discuss. In order to grant to my interlocutor the assumptions she needs to get her project moving, then, I will assume incompatibilism.[11]

IV. THIRD CONSTANTINOPLE AND THE FREEDOM OF CHRIST

The Third Council of Constantinople, held in 680–1, includes a passage that seems problematic for the freedom of the human will of Christ. For the council speaks of the human will being subjugated and following the divine will. Normally, though, we think that if one will subjugates a second will, the subjugated will is not free. And so, in the case of Christ, the human will is not free.

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[11] For discussions of some of these issues from a compatibilistic viewpoint, see Wellum (2016, 459–65) and Feinberg (2006, chaps 14 & 15).

In what follows I will present the passage, then an argument for the inconsistency of the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the Human Freedom Thesis. Finally, I will offer a response to the problem.

IV.a. The Text

The Third Council of Constantinople has the following to say about the relationship between Christ's wills:

> And we proclaim equally two natural volitions or wills in him and two natural principles of action which undergo no division, no change, no partition, no confusion, in accordance with the teaching of the holy fathers. And the two natural wills not in opposition, as the impious heretics said, far from it, but his human will following, and not resisting or struggling, rather in fact subject to his divine and all powerful will. For the will of the flesh had to be moved, and yet to be subjected to the divine will, according to the most wise Athanasius. For just as his flesh is said to be and is flesh of the Word of God, so too the natural will of his flesh is said to and does belong to the Word of God . . . For in the same way that his all holy and blameless animate flesh was not destroyed in being made divine but remained in its own limit and category, so his human will as well was not destroyed by being made divine, but rather was preserved . . . "   (Tanner 1990, 128)

Unfortunately, the text from Athanasius cited here, where he claims that the human will had to be moved, has been lost. But even without that added wrinkle, there is much to wonder about in this passage. For, were we to describe a mundane situation in which my will follows yours without resisting or struggling, and in fact, is subjected to your will, we would be inclined to see this as a hindering of my freedom. In the case of Christ, as described by this conciliar statement, the divine will *moves* the will of the flesh; the will of the flesh is *subjected to* the divine will, not resisting or struggling, but merely being moved by it. This, too, sounds like the wrong sort of situation to be in to be free. But then Christ would not be free in virtue of his human will, contrary to the Human Freedom Thesis.

IV.b. A Presentation of Argument

One might put the argument in the form of a *reductio* as follows:

1. Suppose that the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the Human Freedom Thesis is true.   (For *reductio*.)

2. The human will of Christ was subjected to the divine will and followed the divine will in all things without struggling or resisting.   (From Conciliar Christology.)

3. For any two wills, x and y, if y is subjected to x (Premise.)
   and follows x in all things without struggling or
   resisting, then y is not free.
4. The human will of Christ is not free.   (From 2, 3.)
5. If Christ, by virtue of his assumed human will,   (Premise.)
   is free, then the human will of Christ is free.
6. Thus, it is false that Christ, by virtue of his   (From 4, 5.)
   assumed human will, is free.
7. Contradiction!   (The Human Free-
                       dom Thesis, 6.)
8. Thus, the conjunction of Conciliar Christology   (From 1–7, *reductio*
   and the Human Freedom Thesis is false.   *ad absurdum.*)

8 is validly derived. So, if the proponent of the conjunction presented in 1 desires to avoid contradiction, she must reject the truth of at least one premise. But which?

The proponent of the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the Human Freedom Thesis will not reject the first premise, since that is merely the expression of her view. Nor would she reject 2, since it follows straightforwardly from one conjunct of the conjunction in question. She must therefore reject one of the remaining premises, that is, either Premise 3 or Premise 5 (or both). For if she accepts both of these, then the other steps—4, 6, 7, and 8—follow straightforwardly.

What reason is there for accepting Premises 3 and 5? Concerning Premise 3, we may have a strong inductive case for it. Consider the thought experiments put forward as cases where one does not have free will. For instance, consider the nefarious neuroscientist Black, who installs a nanobot into the unfortunate Jones. The nanobot is set to cause Jones to will to do something, were Jones not to will to do it on his own. As it happens, Jones does will to do it on his own; but, the proponents of this example say he was not free to do otherwise, since the nanobot would have caused him to will to do the action.[12] In this case, Black is acting so as to subject the will of Jones to his own, by means of a nanobot. Or consider other standard cases, such as hypnotism.[13] If you hypnotize me to do something such that my will is entirely subjected to yours, and it follows what your will commands it to do without even resisting or struggling, then that is sufficient in much of the free will literature to show me to be unfree in that activity.

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[12] For a defense of the claim that, in the actual sequence of such a case, the agent would not be free, see the article that started reflection on such cases, Frankfurt (1969, 830f.).

[13] See also Eleonore Stump's (1996) example involving characters from Dostoevsky's novel *The Possessed*.

Suppose you hypnotize me to dance a jig every time you say a command phrase: "gaudy tomato." And suppose I'm so well hypnotized that I do it without resisting or struggling, entirely subject to your will by means of your command. In such a case, it is hard to see how I can be free in so dancing when you command. Now extrapolate to all my actions. Suppose you form a command language such that everything I do is done by your command, without resistance or struggle. Such a case, one might argue, is similar to the case of Christ's human will. These cases, and others like them, give support to Premise 3.

Premise 5 seems to have some initial plausibility to it as well. It licenses the move from attributing freedom of the person in virtue of a will, to attributing freedom of that very will. In mundane cases, we don't often make a distinction between attributing freedom of the person in virtue of his will, and freedom of his will. We say, in common cases, interchangeably, both that he has free will and that his will is free. This, then, gives us reason to think that the claims are used synonymously. If they are, then the truth of one ensures the truth of the other, and this conditional premise is thus true.

Where, then, is the opening for the proponent of this extension of Conciliar Christology to challenge this argument? In the next section, I will consider a reply to this argument.

IV.c. A Reply to the Argument

Consider a proof by cases involving three cases: either both wills and persons are aptly called "free" in the same sense, or only wills are, or only persons are.

Suppose, to consider a first case, that only persons are aptly called "free."[14] The will might even be that thing in virtue of which the person is free or not, but it is not itself a free thing. If only persons are aptly called free, then the proponent of Conciliar Christology and the Human Freedom Thesis can grant Premise 3. For when we substitute in Christ's divine and human wills for x and y, respectively, the antecedent is true according to Conciliar Christology. And the consequent is true, owing to the fact that no will is aptly predicated by "free" and so, for any will at all, including Christ's human will, it is true to say that "this will is not free." But premise 5 turns out to be false if only persons are free. Its antecedent is true, given the Human Freedom Thesis, but the consequent is false for reasons similar to why the consequent of 3 is true—no will, Christ's or other, is free. And so, the proponent of this disjunct of the proof by cases will deny 5, and so claim the argument against her view to be unsound.

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[14] One might, for instance, follow Frankfurt (1971) and hold that freedom of the will is precisely the mark of an agent's being a person rather than a mere wanton.

Suppose, to consider the second case, only wills are aptly called "free." In such a case, the Human Freedom Thesis is false, as stated. For, as stated, it is attributing freedom to the *person*, Christ. Rather, one ought to say, on this view, that the Human Freedom Thesis is the claim that:

Revised Human Freedom Thesis: Christ's created human will was free.

Given the Revised Human Freedom Thesis, what ought one to make of the argument? Premise 5 comes out true because the antecedent is false, given the assumption that only wills are free. Thus, the whole conditional is true. But it is unnecessary for the argument, assuming that only wills are free. What is derived at Premise 4, that Christ's human will was not free, is sufficient to contradict the Revised Human Freedom Thesis. And so, 5 becomes unnecessary to the argument. On this second disjunct of the proof by cases, the proponent of the initial extension of Conciliar Christology must reject Premise 3. On what grounds, though?

Above, I gave some inductive reasons for thinking that Premise 3 is true. Despite this inductive support, however, I think that there is room to deny it. The examples I gave in the inductive case for Premise 3 all involved cases where one person manipulates something about another person in order to control that person. In such cases, I am happy to claim that the manipulated person is not free (or, in the language of this case, that the will of the person is not free). But what of situations where one person has two wills, and one of those wills is subjected to the other? We have no inductive case to give for such examples, since we only know of one case where such a thing occurs—the incarnation.[15] The inductive case, then, provides no evidence for the full generality of the premise.

Not only might the proponent of the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the Human Freedom Thesis or the Revised Human Freedom Thesis reject the motivation put forward for accepting Premise 3, she might also provide an account of the conciliar text in question on which Premise 3 is false. The councils are not explicit on what amount of control the divine will employs over the human will. There are multiple interpretations one could give, and not all of them require the complete docility of the human will.[16] Perhaps the divine will subjects the human will by means of putting parameters on the sorts of activities the human will could will. Moreover, perhaps the human will does not resist or struggle against the parameters. Perhaps the moving of the human will that the divine will engages in is putting the human will in the

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[15] Timpe (2015a) contains a discussion of a non-assumed human will being subjected to the divine will in a way that doesn't involve manipulation. However, insofar as the model of cooperative agency developed there is modeled on the incarnation, it doesn't provide independent support against the inductive case for Premise 3.

[16] See (Pawl 2016e, 219–21) for some discussion of the various options.

position to have such parameters in place. If this is a viable way of reading the conciliar text, then the proponent of the extended Conciliar Christology under discussion in this chapter has a means by which to deny the truth of Premise 3. For, on this interpretation of the text, nothing in the text requires that the human will not be a source of free action on the part of the person. Within the parameters there may well be multiple options. If there are such options open to the will (or open for the agent to choose by means of the will) then Premise 3 is false.

To conclude this second case in the proof by cases, then, were we to understand the term "free" such that it only applied to wills, and not to persons, then the proponent of the extension under discussion in this chapter can both deny the motivation put forward by the opponent for Premise 3 and provide some positive reason for denying Premise 3 as well.

I have now argued that the *reductio* against the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the Human Freedom Thesis is unsound if either only wills or only persons can be free. Now consider the third case, according to which both wills *and* persons can aptly be considered free. On this option, the disjunction of the Human Freedom Thesis and the Revised Human Freedom Thesis is assumed along with Conciliar Christology in the first step of the argument, since both persons and wills are free. In such a circumstance, the same reasons that undercut the motivation for Premise 3 previously undercut it here as well. The inductive evidence for Premise 3 comes only from cases where there are two persons involved, which is disanalogous to this case. Moreover, as stated above, the nature of the control the divine will exhibits over the human will is left underdetermined by the conciliar documents.

To conclude my proof by cases, then, if persons but not wills can aptly be called "free," then Premise 5 is false. If wills alone, or wills and persons, are aptly called "free," then the proponent of the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the Human Freedom Thesis can both deny that the motivation for Premise 3 is satisfactory and argue that the nature of the subjection of the human will is underdetermined, given the conciliar texts. Thus, the proponent of the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the Human Freedom Thesis has the resources to deny the soundness of the argument considered in Section IV.b by either denying the truth of Premise 3, denying the motivation for Premise 3, or denying the truth of Premise 5.

There is more to be said about this passage, concerning how it is read. The passage as typically translated (see above), says that "the will of the flesh had to be moved, and yet to be subjected to the divine will." However, there is both grammatical and historical reason to believe that the verb translated "to be moved" is in the middle voice, which renders the verb self-reflexive. As de Aldama and Solano (2014, 183) write, "Therefore the exact version is: for it is necessary that the will of the flesh *move itself*, but also that it be submitted to the divine will." Moreover, they cite the acts of the council as evidence that this

is the intended meaning of the phrase. If that's the case—if the will is moving itself, and not merely being moved—that takes most of the steam out of the argument that this passage implies that Christ's human will was not free due to its being pulled around by the divine will.

V. CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have considered an argument for the conclusion that the freedom of Christ's human will is inconsistent with the truth of Conciliar Christology. This argument was based on a passage from Third Constantinople, which states that the human will is subjected to and moved by the divine will, and that it does not struggle or resist the activity of the divine will. In response, I argued that, depending on how one understood the word "free," whether it is most aptly predicated to the person, the will, or both, one or another premise of the argument will be false and under-motivated. I then went on to reference historical and grammatical evidence that the proper reading of the offending text is not passive—the will had to *be moved*—but middle—the will had to *move itself*. On such a reading, this worry hardly arises. I conclude that if Christ's human freedom is inconsistent with Conciliar Christology, it has yet to be shown, or, perhaps more temperedly, if there is a problem, it is not the problem I discussed in this chapter.

6

Impeccability and Temptation

I. INTRODUCTION

Christian scripture and the early ecumenical councils both teach that Christ was sinless yet tempted. In addition, many in the Christian tradition claim that, not only was Christ without sin, *he was unable to sin*, an attribute most commonly known as "impeccability." Moreover, on this view, he wasn't just impeccable at some point or other, say, prior to the incarnation and after his resurrection. He was impeccable during his earthly ministry as well. We can define the thesis appended to Conciliar Christology in the extension under discussion in this chapter as follows:

> *The Impeccability Thesis*:   Christ was unable to sin.[1]

In this chapter, I consider one reason for thinking that the Impeccability Thesis is inconsistent with Christ's being tempted. I will discuss multiple responses to that argument, as well as the concepts employed in the premises—tempted; able to sin.[2] Finally, drawing on previous work, I will discuss a means by which to affirm that Christ is both peccable and impeccable without contradiction.[3]

Here, my goal is to show that the conjunction of the Impeccability Thesis and Conciliar Christology (which, as we will see, includes as two of its conjuncts the claims that Christ was tempted and that Christ was sinless) is not shown to be false by an argument which claims that being tempted implies being peccable.[4]

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[1] Some have argued that God, even aside from incarnational considerations, cannot be impeccable. This is a different topic than the topic of Christ's temptation and impeccability, though, of course, it is related. See, for instance: Gellman (1977), Morris (1983), Brümmer (1984), Carter (1985), Garcia (1987), Leftow (1989), Stump (2005, 102–7), and Funkhouser (2006).

[2] I will use "capable" and "able" interchangeably in this chapter.

[3] See Pawl (2014a, 2016e, chap. 7).

[4] If the Impeccability Thesis were part of Conciliar Christology, then the Impeccability Thesis would show up twice in the conjunction I am defending. That would be redundant, but it wouldn't affect the success of the project or the logic of the forthcoming argumentation.

II. THE WITNESS OF TRADITION

Christian scripture teaches that "in every respect [Christ] has been tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15, RSV).[5] The earliest ecumenical councils echo this teaching. For instance, Cyril writes of Christ's sinlessness to Nestorius, in a letter accepted as an official part of the Council of Ephesus: "For he never committed a fault at all, nor did he sin in any way. What sort of offering would he need then since there was no sin for which offering might rightly be made?" (Tanner 1990, 57). The documents accepted at the Council of Chalcedon affirm both Christ's temptation and his sinlessness. Concerning his temptation, we read in Leo's Tome: "the same one whom the devil craftily tempts as a man, the angels dutifully wait on as God" (Tanner 1990, 79). Concerning Christ's sinlessness, the Definition of faith from Chalcedon likewise says of Christ that he was "like us in all respects except for sin" (Tanner 1990, 86).[6] Christ, then, according to scripture and the Christology of the earliest councils, is sinless, yet also tempted.[7]

Whether the Impeccability Thesis enjoys as strong support from either scripture or early council as the claims that Christ was sinless and that Christ was tempted is vexed. There are those who agree with Fr O'Collins (1995, 281), who writes: "Neither the New Testament nor the post-New Testament teaching [including the councils] takes us beyond merely de facto sinlessness to any clear claim about Jesus' de jure sinlessness [that is, his impeccability]." On the other hand, there are those that agree with Fr Michael Schmaus (1971, 259), who claims that both council and scripture teach that Jesus was "incapable of disobeying God."

Fr Pohle (1913, 214) agrees with O'Collins in respect to the teaching of scripture. On the other hand, the reformed theologian, Herman Bavinck (2006, 314), writes "Scripture . . . prompts us to recognize in Christ, not just an empirical sinlessness, but a necessary sinlessness as well."

E. A. Weis (2003) writes that impeccability is not defined in the ecumenical councils. Weis, writing for the Catholic Encyclopedia, is including the later medieval and modern councils in his estimation as well. Pohle, on the other

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[5] Though see Marilyn McCord Adams (2006, 75–6, 79), who argues that we need not read this passage as supposing that Christ was utterly sinless.

[6] The sinlessness of Christ is taught elsewhere in the conciliar statements as well. Cyril, in his Third Letter to Nestorius, pens the anathema: "if anyone says that he offered the sacrifice also for himself and not rather for us alone (for he who knew no sin needed no offering), let him be anathema" (Tanner 1990, 60–1). Leo's Tome says, "His subjection to human weaknesses in common with us did not mean that he shared our sins" (Tanner 1990, 78). See also the Exposition of faith from Third Constantinople (Tanner 1990, 127). For more on Christ's temptation in Christian tradition, see Kereszty (2002, 98–104), McKinley (2009, chap. 1), Pannenberg (1968, 354–9), and Pohle (1913, 207–12).

[7] For a discussion of the sinlessness of Christ and its relation to whether he had a fallen or unfallen nature, see McFarland (2008).

hand, writes that "the early councils of the Church unanimously uphold the impeccability of our divine Redeemer and trace it to the Hypostatic Union."[8] For instance, Leo wrote to Flavian:

> Overcoming the originator of sin and death would be beyond us, had not *he whom sin could not defile*, nor could death hold down, taken up our nature and made it his own.   (Tanner 1990, 77, emphasis added)

What does Leo mean to express when he says that sin could not defile Christ? One straightforward reading of that passage is to take it as saying that Christ could not sin. If that's right, then we have a good case for the conciliar teaching of impeccability.

There are at least two other reasons one might see in the councils for believing the Impeccability Thesis is contained therein. First, Second Constantinople in 553 includes an anathema, the 12th, which anathematizes anyone who claims that it was "after the resurrection [that Christ] became unchangeable in thoughts and absolutely unerring" (Denzinger 2002, para. 224). As Christ is absolutely unerring now, and didn't become so after the resurrection, he must have been in such a state prior to the resurrection.

Second, perhaps the claim in Third Constantinople that Christ's human will was subjugated to the divine will, a claim I quoted in Section IV.a of Chapter 5, implies the Impeccability Thesis. The human will is subjugated to the divine will, following it without resistance. But the divine will could never will to sin. So, the human will of Christ could not will sin. Thus, neither will could will sin. Therefore, Christ is incapable of willing sin, and hence is impeccable. In other places, the authors of the conciliar statements are more straightforward. For instance, St Cyril writes, with his usual dialectical delicacy: "All those who maintain that Christ was able to commit sin—I know not how—are foolish and destitute of reason."[9] We find de Aldama and Solano (2014, 155–68) arguing for the impeccability of Christ.

For my project in this book, I need not settle whether the scriptural or conciliar evidence implies the truth of the Impeccability Thesis. Were an argument for the falsity of the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the Impeccability Thesis to be sound, it would show that the majority of Christian thinkers have held false Christologies, since the majority, as I understand from reading my betters, have affirmed that Christ was tempted and impeccable. If Pohle is right, and the impeccability of Christ is taught in the early councils,

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[8] One wonders about the meaning of "unanimous" in this quotation. Not all the councils discuss impeccability. In fact, so far as I know, the only early ecumenical councils which seem to speak on it are Chalcedon, Second Constantinople, and Third Constantinople. Rather than unanimously upholding that Christ is impeccable, it seems that the best Pohle could claim is that of the seven councils, the votes are four abstentions and three "yea"s.

[9] As quoted by Pohle (1913, 214) with a reference to Anthropom., c. 23.

such an argument would show that Conciliar Christology—the Christological foundation of both Catholic and Orthodox theology—is false.

Moreover, since all but two of the conciliar sources I cited above are from Chalcedon or earlier, many confessional Protestant groups that affirm the truth of the teaching of the first four councils would affirm inconsistent Christologies as well. Pannenberg (1968, 360), for instance, notes that "Older Protestant dogmatics retained the doctrine that Jesus was incapable of sin." If this incapability of sin is inconsistent with Christ's being tempted or free, so much the worse for Catholic, Orthodox, and older Protestant dogma.

III. THE PROBLEM

The view that being tempted implies that the person tempted be able to sin is not a historical novelty, though it may have more proponents in the recent past than it has in the remote past. In the next, brief subsection, I will provide a few quotations from four of the more recent proponents of such views. Then, in the following subsection, I provide an argument schema for the problem.

III.a. The View as Presented in the Literature

Charles Hodge writes:

> This sinlessness of our Lord, however, does not amount to absolute impeccability. It was not a *non potest peccare. If He was a true man He must have been capable of sinning*. That He did not sin under the greatest provocation; that when He was reviled He blessed; when He suffered He threatened not; that He was dumb as a sheep before its shearers, is held up to us as an example. *Temptation implies the possibility of sin.* If from the constitution of his person it was impossible for Christ to sin, then his temptation was unreal and without effect, and He cannot sympathize with his people.   (Hodge 1965, 2:457, emphasis added)

Here Hodge lists two conditional claims (italicized above), both of which begin with an antecedent that is affirmed by Chalcedonian Christology: "He was a true man" and that he underwent "temptation." The consequent of each claim, however, is contrary to the traditional view of Christ: "He must have been capable of sinning" and he had "the possibility of sin." If either of these conditional statements is true, then it follows that the conjunction I wish to defend is false (and vice versa—if the conjunction is true, the conditionals are false).

A second example. Fr O'Collins, in his Christology textbook, discusses the same two reasons for denying the impeccability of Christ. Being a true man

requires "genuine human freedom." But then he immediately asks (1995, 280), "If Jesus could not have sinned under any circumstances whatsoever, was he truly free?" Likewise, on the same page, he writes "If he truly felt temptation—and that must mean feeling tempted inwardly—how can this be coherent with his being intrinsically and absolutely impeccable?"

Third, Philip Schaff (1880, 31–2) writes of Christ:

> Had he been endowed from the start with *absolute* impeccability, or with the impossibility of sinning, he could not be a true man, nor our model for imitation: his holiness, instead of being his own self-acquired act and inherent merit, would be an accidental or outward gift, and his temptation an unreal show. As a true man, Christ must have been a free and responsible moral agent: freedom implies the power of choice between good and evil, and the power of disobedience as well as obedience to the law of God.

Here again we see the same two conditional statements emerge, worded in different ways: If Christ is human, then he is peccable (because if human, then free, and if free, then able to do evil); if Christ is tempted, then he is not impeccable.

Finally, in a recent, careful book, John McKinley (who also cites Schaff and Hodge) writes of these same two conditionals, providing many more references to scholars who assert their truth. It seems to me that these two conditional statements (temptation precludes impeccability; being human precludes impeccability) underlie the main philosophical arguments against the truth of the conjunction of traditional Christology and the Impeccability Thesis.[10] I will provide an argument schema below that functions for both conditionals.

III.b. The Argument Formalized

One can present the argumentation of these thinkers as follows:

1. If a pe rson is *x*, then that person is capable of   (Assume.)
   sinning (i.e., peccable).
2. Christ is *x*.   (From Conciliar Christology.)
3. Thus, Christ is capable of sinning (peccable).   (From 1, 2.)

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[10] Others who discuss the conditionals that temptation precludes impeccability or that humanity precludes impeccability include (Arendzen 1941, 181–4; Banks 1973, 50–5; Canham 2000, 95; Couehoven 2012, 406–7; Crisp 2007d, 2007b; Davidson 2008, 395; Dahms 1978, 373; Erickson 1996, 562; Fisk 2007; Gaine 2015b, 168–72; King 2015, 73–6; Knox 1967, 47–52; Morris 1987, chap. 7; Murray and Rea 2008, 82–90; O'Collins 1995, 283–4; Sturch 1991, 19–20; Swinburne 1994, 204–7; B. A. Ware 2013, chap. 5; Wellum 2016, 459–65; Werther 1993, 2012).

4. If a person is capable of sinning (peccable),   (Assume.)
   then that person is not impeccable.
5. Thus, Christ is not impeccable.   (From 3, 4.)

The argument schema is valid. Thus, if the premises are true for some way of filling in for *x*, we have a sound argument for the conclusion that Christ was not impeccable. Furthermore, if that substituend for *x* is something which traditional Christology teaches of Christ, then we have a proof for the claim that traditional Christology is internally inconsistent. Since Steps 3 and 5 are derivations, the main focus of our discussion must be on Premises 1, 2, and 4.

It seems overly pedantic, even for an analytic philosopher, to include Premise 4 in the argument. Isn't it obvious that someone can't be both peccable and impeccable? Well, it depends on how we understand the terms, as I will explain in Section V.b. Some thinkers have argued that Christ was both peccable *and* impeccable, in which case peccability wouldn't imply the lack of impeccability, and Premise 4 would be false.

Concerning Premises 1 and 2, the substituends for *x* that philosophers and theologians have put forward include "human," "tempted," and "free." Suppose, then, that we substitute in "tempted" for the variable in our argument schema. Only two premises change, and of those, I've already given reason in Section II of this chapter for believing that the second, that Christ is tempted, is true, given scripture and Conciliar Christology. Similarly, we have reason from scripture and Conciliar Christology for thinking that Christ is human. Finally, in Chapter 5, I provided reason, not from Conciliar Christology, but from other important sources, for the claim that Christ is free with respect to his human nature. The focus, then, should be on the instances of the first premise, that if a person is tempted, or free, or human, then that person is capable of sinning. Why think that these claims are true?

Concerning freedom, if there are some individuals who are free and yet cannot sin, that shows that ability to sin is not a necessary condition for freedom. The Christian tradition has seen fit, in all ages, to claim that the Father and Holy Spirit cannot sin.[11] Moreover, the good angels are confirmed in their righteousness now, which implies that they are unable to sin. Finally, there is reason to believe that the redeemed are free but unable to sin (Pawl and Timpe 2009). Thus, there is at least one individual who is free and unable to sin. On traditional Christian theism, then, freedom does not require the ability to sin.

If the opponent wishes to push the argument, the opponent needs either to provide evidence that such individuals are capable of sinning, or to modify the

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[11] I think the case is just as strong for the Son, but since the case of the Son is what is under dispute in this chapter, I will leave it to one side here. For more on God's freedom, see Timpe (2012a).

premise so that it isn't universal. The problem for modifying it seems to me to be that the modification would need to rule out divine persons from the range of individuals for which freedom requires the ability to sin. But the Son, Jesus Christ, is a divine person, and so such a reining in of the principle would render it no longer relevant to this discussion. Perhaps then it should rule out all non-humans. Since the Son is human, but the other divine persons and the angels are not, those individuals would not be counterexamples to the premise in question. How, though, would one explain the freedom of the redeemed, in such a case? I leave it to the proponent of such an argument to do the work.

What of substituting in "human" for x: does being fully human require that the human be able to sin? Again, I don't see why the answer should be a "yes." First, Kevin Timpe and I have argued in print elsewhere that the redeemed in heaven are unable to sin, yet free.[12] Second, consider a thought experiment. Suppose that God "took over" my volitional abilities and kept me free from sin. Suppose that, for some length of time—it could be just to get me past a trial, or it could be for the entirety of my existence— God moved me (and only me, not you) around like a puppet. If you've followed me so far in that supposition, then you've allowed for the possibility that something be human but unable to sin. On the other hand, perhaps you thought:

> I can't suppose that! That's like trying to assume that God took away your essential qualities and left you around. Or like trying to assume that God took the mammality but left the cat. It can't be.

If you thought that, then this thought experiment won't be of use to you. But if you did consider the possibility of God leaving me in existence but taking away my ability to will freely, and so taking away my ability to sin, while not destroying me and my humanity, that's evidence that you didn't really think that the ability to sin is a necessary condition for being human.

For now, I will focus on the premise we acquire when we substitute in "tempted" for x. That is the premise I find the most plausible. Thus, henceforth, when I mention Premise 1, I mean the premise when "tempted" is substituted in for x.

It is hard to find explicit argumentation in support of Premise 1. Perhaps there is a good reason for this. Trevor Hart seems to think that Premise 1 is true without need of justification. He writes:

> Is the genuine potential for sin not analytic in some way in the very notion of temptation? Certainly it would seem to be basic to human temptation as we know and experience it.   (Hart 1995, 38)

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[12] See Pawl and Timpe (2009, 2013). To see discussion of our view, see Brown (2015), Cowan (2011), Henderson (2014, 2016), Pawl and Timpe (2017), and Tamburro (2014).

If Hart is right, it makes sense that opponents of the Impeccability Thesis who use the Temptation Argument do not defend Premise 1 with arguments. After all, how does one defend the claim that one concept is analytically included in another by means of an argument? What argument would you give to show that all bachelors are unmarried? Any argument would have premises less obvious than the conclusion one is trying to derive.

IV. RESPONSES THAT DENY THE TRUTH OF PREMISE 1

For my own part, I do not see that the ability to sin is analytically required for the very notion of temptation. In the next subsections, I will discuss two reasons to deny Premise 1.

IV.a. The Epistemic Response

Perhaps only the *appearance* of the potential for sin is required for temptation. It appears to the dieting Donald that he can acquire the pleasure that pulls him toward the donut shop, and that appearance is sufficient for his allurement to be rightly characterized as temptation, even in the case where the shop is closed. This is an oft-discussed view, which has a fair number of advocates, both Catholic and Protestant.[13] On this response, call it the *epistemic response*, the first premise of the Temptation Argument is rejected. It is replaced instead with a weaker claim, which Morris, an advocate of the view, expresses as follows. Being tempted:

> requires only that the imagined deed not be an epistemic impossibility for him. He must think it possible, and within his power to do. It need not actually be so . . . Jesus could be tempted to sin just in case it was epistemically possible for him that he sin.   (Morris 1987, 147–8)

On this view, the dieter, to be tempted, needs to think both that it is possible to find a delicious donut in the shop, and that it is within his power to do so.

What is it to be "epistemically possible" in this context? Morris provides what he calls a "very rough, but sufficient" explanation of it as follows:

> Some proposition P is epistemically possible for some subject S at a time t just in case it is epistemically possible relative to a full accessible belief-set B of S at t,

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[13] This epistemic view is discussed, for instance, by Bartel (1995, 154–5), Hart (1995, 41), Morris (1987, 147–8), and O'Collins (1995, 283–4).

where that relation [of accessibility] consists in something like the following: *B* neither contains nor self-evidently entails the denial of *P*, nor does *B* contain or self-evidently entail propositions which seem to *S* to show *P* to be either false or impossible. A full accessible belief-set of a person at a time consists in all and only those beliefs which are accessible to a range of conscious thought and deliberation of that person at that time sufficient to support the initiation of action.

(Morris 1987, 148)[14]

Christ, on Morris's view, had a full belief-set accessible to his human range of consciousness during some particular temptation—say, the temptation to adore Satan for the sake of ruling the world. His belief-set accessible to his human range of consciousness during that time (I will just call it his "belief-set" henceforth; the reader should assume the extra verbiage) could not have included the beliefs "I am unable to sin" or "I am impeccable" or "I am unable to adore Satan," on Morris's view. For if he had such a belief, Christ (in his human intellect) would not view it as epistemically possible for him to adore Satan. Moreover, the belief-set couldn't include "I am God" and "God cannot sin"; or "I am God" and "God is perfectly good." For such conjunctions immediately and obviously entail that he cannot sin, and as such make his sinning no longer an epistemic possibility, as so defined. Is there reason to think that he did believe that he was God, and either that God cannot sin, or that God is perfectly good? If there is reason to believe that he thought these things, then the epistemic response will not work. It will not work, since Jesus would not fulfill the conditions required for being tempted; it won't be epistemically possible to him for him to sin.[15]

By the time of this temptation (just after his baptism), Jesus has already shown himself to be an expert in scripture (that is, the Old Testament). And so, we have reason to think that he knew the many passages in the Old Testament that speak of God's holiness, justice, and sinlessness. For just one instance, Deuteronomy 32:4:

> The Rock, his work is perfect;
> for all his ways are justice.
> A God of faithfulness and without iniquity,
> just and right is he.   (RSV)

And even if for some reason Christ was ignorant of scripture, one needn't know scripture to know that God does no wrong; perfect being theology is another way of acquiring that truth. Moreover, even if he were ignorant of scripture and perfect being theology, we see Jesus himself teaching the moral uprightness of God, for instance, when he admonishes his followers to be

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[14] See also McKinley (2009, 239–43).
[15] The Foreknowledge Thesis, which I am not yet assuming in this chapter, seems to me to preclude the Epistemic Response. See the discussion of the Foreknowledge Thesis in Chapters 7 and 8.

perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect (Matt. 5:48). But if Christ knew that God was sinless and that his ways are perfect, then he must not have known that he was God during the time at which he was tempted, on this Epistemic response. For if the belief-set included that belief, then it does entail the denial of the claim "I can adore Satan," and so his adoring Satan would not be epistemically possible for him.[16]

If, as the Epistemic response requires, Jesus didn't have both beliefs, "I am God" and "God cannot sin," epistemically accessible, but he did have the belief, "God cannot sin" accessible, then he must not have had the belief "I am God" accessible. When did Jesus come to know that he was God? Different groups give different answers. Here I will provide a brief survey. For a more detailed look at traditional views of what Christ knew when, see Chapter 7, Section II.

For Catholics, the answer is that he always knew. Pope Pius X's *Lamentabili Sane* (the Syllabus of Errors) includes a condemnation of the claim: "Christ did not always possess the consciousness of His Messianic dignity." One might be inclined to read this as a claim that Christ knew, via only his divine nature, of his messianic dignity. But the recent Catholic catechism makes it clear that this is not the mind of the Church. It says:

> 473 But at the same time, this truly human knowledge of God's Son expressed the divine life of his person. "The human nature of God's Son, *not by itself but by its union with the Word*, knew and showed forth in itself everything that pertains to God." Such is first of all the case with the intimate and immediate knowledge that the Son of God made man has of his Father. The Son in his human knowledge also showed the divine penetration he had into the secret thoughts of human hearts.

> 474 By its union to the divine wisdom in the person of the Word incarnate, Christ enjoyed in his human knowledge the fullness of understanding of the eternal plans he had come to reveal. What he admitted to not knowing in this area, he elsewhere declared himself not sent to reveal.
>
> (Catechism of the Catholic Church 2000, 119–20)

Here it is clear that his knowledge of his Father, and the fullness of understanding of the eternal plans he came to reveal, are had in his human intellect as well. O'Collins (1995, 275) writes that from "a primordial awareness... Jesus *knew* God, his own divine identity, and redemptive mission."[17]

Moreover, a common teaching of the Medievals, one affirmed by Pope Pius XII in his *Mystici Corporis Christi* (para. 75) was that Christ had, in his human

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[16] Does it *self-evidently* entail it? I don't know, but if some entailments get to count as self-evident, this one doesn't seem like an improper addition to the group.

[17] For more on the content of Christ's human knowledge, see sect. 2 of my articles: Pawl (2014b, 2014c), and see Section II of Chapter 7. According to the Catholic manualist Matthias Scheeben (Wilhelm and Scannell 1901, 2:147), Christ gained the beatific vision at conception and, from the beginning, knew of his own divinity.

nature, the beatific vision, from the first moment of his conception.[18] Thus, he had the knowledge the redeemed have of God for the entirety of his human life. For instance, Aquinas taught, in a passage that will remain pertinent for the remainder of this book, that:

> It is possible for a created intellect which sees God to know all that God knows with His knowledge of vision. All hold this is true of the soul of Christ . . . Consequently, the soul of Christ, which sees God more perfectly than all other creatures do is said to know all things, present, past, and future.
>   (Aquinas 1954, *QDV* (*Quaestiones Disputatae de Veritate*), q.8 a.4 resp.)[19]

Likewise, the Lutheran document, *The Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord* (1577) VIII, para. 74 claims:

> For upon Him the Father poured without measure the Spirit of wisdom and power, so that, as man, He has received through this personal union all knowledge and all power in deed and truth. And thus all the treasures of wisdom are hidden in Him, thus all power is given to Him, and He is seated at the right hand of the majesty and power of God.[20]

And the same Declaration makes it clear, at VIII para. 26, that what was received through the personal union was received at the first moment of the union, so that Christ, at the beginning of his earthly life, had all knowledge and power.

 One traditional view, then, is that Christ knew from the beginning, even in his human knowledge, that he was God incarnate.[21] And even if one takes a weaker view, that Christ only learned this about himself at his baptism, that knowledge would be fresh on his mind when it came to the temptations, since he is led by the spirit to the wilderness to be tested by the devil immediately after that baptism. The above confessional claims also preclude a variant of the epistemic response in which Christ is merely ignorant of the relevant claims, rather than believing the opposite of them. For the texts make clear that Christ

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[18] Arendzen (1941, 165) writes: "Christ's Beatific Vision has been so obvious to all, that within the Church no heretical view has ever arisen about this point, and hence it has never as yet been defined by Pope or Council in solemn definition."

[19] All forthcoming English quotations from Aquinas's *Disputed Questions on Truth* will be from this translation unless otherwise noted.

[20] <http://bookofconcord.org/sd-person. php#para74>.

[21] See Schmaus (1971, 239–40) for more on this point. As Bartel (1991, 35) writes, "Cyril, along with many of his contemporaries, believed that Christ's human soul was not subject to ignorance: the Scriptural texts which suggest otherwise only mean that Christ pretended to be ignorant in order to accomplish the purposes of his incarnation." Concerning the contemporaries who agree, Bartel (1991, n. 39) writes in a footnote: "Contemporaries or near-contemporaries of Cyril who shared his opinion include Athanasius, Against the Arians III, 51–3; Gregory of Nazianzus, Theological Oration 30, 15ff. and 43, 38; Basil of Caesarea, Epistle 236, 1; and Augustine, On the Trinity I, 23." John of Damascus (1958, 324–5) believed that the soul of Christ received knowledge of future contingents from the hypostatic union.

neither believed a falsehood about his status, nor was ignorant of it, but rather believed the truth about his divine status. Baker (2013, 65) writes, concerning Christ's knowledge of the past, present, and future: "Christ's human knowledge was free from all ignorance and error."

While the epistemic response might be an option for some, it is precluded by those who affirm a traditional Christology. For Christ, on traditional Christology, knew he was a person of the blessed Trinity, the one God, and knew his messianic role even in his human nature, by means of his human intellect. And so, it wasn't epistemically possible for Christ to sin, either with respect to his human belief-set, or his divine. It appears to me, then, that the epistemic move is not going to work for a large swath of people committed to either the stronger or weaker versions of the claim that Christ knew he was God. As such, I will consider another means of answering the Temptation Argument. To do so, I will discuss the main concepts of *temptation* and the *ability to do something* in what follows.

IV.b. A Psychological Response

Drawing from recent work in psychology and work in philosophy and theology, this section will attempt to give some insight into what temptation is, but more into what it isn't.[22] As this chapter was written during Lent, this section is also a work of experimental philosophy, or perhaps experimental phenomenology. The goal of this section is to show that there is a viable understanding of temptation that does not require peccability of the tempted.

To begin, to feel tempted is to feel "pulled" toward doing something or letting something happen. But it is more than that. The pull needs to be in a direction that the tempted person thinks she shouldn't go. That "shouldn't" needn't be assumed to be a moral shouldn't. For instance, when dieting, one might say that he feels tempted to eat the cake, because his appetite is riled up by the smell of the cake, but in a typical diet scenario, one doesn't *sin* in eating the cake (I'm supposing that the eater made no "no cake" vow; eating this bit of cake is no transgression of prudence, etc.).

This view that the pull need not be in the direction of something viewed as immoral is consonant with the contemporary psychological research on temptation.[23] For instance, a recent study writes:

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[22] For analyses of temptation, see Day (1993) and Hoffman (2005), and Hughes (2002). Leftow (2014) provides some careful necessary conditions for temptation, which I take to map on quite well to the psychological accounts of temptation I consider below.

[23] "Temptation," I've found, is not a widely used concept in contemporary psychology. I asked three psychologists—a professor of psychology, a supervisor at a center for children's psychological health, and a seminarian formation psychologist—for aid in finding a standard usage of

> We define desire as an "affectively charged cognitive event in which an object or activity that is associated with pleasure or relief of discomfort is in focal attention."[24]

From this definition of desire, the study goes on to define temptation as follows:

> desires may or may not conflict with the person's values and goals. Conflict is the perception that there is some reason not to enact the desire and thus serves to distinguish unproblematic desires from problematic desires (i.e., temptations).
>
> (Hofmann et al. 2012, 1319)

The full concept of temptation being employed in this study, then, is:

> *Temptation*:   An affectively charged cognitive event in which an object or activity that is associated with pleasure or relief of discomfort is in focal attention, yet the object of that desire conflicts with the person's values and goals.[25]

One might question certain aspects of this definition. Must the discomfort be merely relieved? Couldn't it be *avoided*? Must the desire conflict with both a person's values *and* goals? Wouldn't conflict with goals be enough? If I desire to eat cake, have set the goal of weight loss, and have no values contrary to eating cake, couldn't this be a case of temptation? Moreover, isn't the definition of desire in the above block quotation contrary to traditional faculty psychology? It appears to reduce desiring—the act of the will—to an intellectual act ("cognitive event") conjoined with an act of the appetites ("affectively charged"). In response to this second objection, I don't think that the psychologists were intending to imply anything about faculty psychology or the reduction of acts of the will to conjoined acts of the appetites and intellect. The exact definition of desiring here isn't necessary for my point. My main goal is to show a viable sense of "temptation" as a desire that conflicts with one's goals, and not necessarily one that is *sinful*. We can take or leave the exact understanding of desire while noting that this definition of temptation

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the term. It appears that of the well-known general psychology textbooks used at the University of St Thomas, *The Dictionary of Psychology* online, *The Psychology of Religion*, and *The Handbook of the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*, none of them makes mention of "temptation."

[24] This study is Hofman et al. (2012, 1319); the internal citation is to Kavanaugh, Andrade, and May (2005, 447).

[25] I am not claiming that these authors have discovered their proffered definitions to be correct by means of psychological studies. Rather, these are the definitions with which they begin their articles. They are likely formed by psychological work, but I do not want to give the impression that these definitions are the results of any experiments that these psychologists performed (to the best of my knowledge).

does not require the object of the affectively charged cognitive event to be something *sinful*.

Likewise, another study understands temptation to require a "distal goal" which is in conflict with that which one desires:

> The presence of a distal goal that conflicts with the immediate temptation is a necessary precursor to self-control. Indeed, it may be argued that a distal goal is required for a self-regulation conflict to arise in the first place—if there is no goal of eating healthy, or losing weight, then the piece of chocolate cake does not constitute a "temptation," and no self-control will be needed.
>
> <div align="right">(Milyavskaya et al. 2015, 678)</div>

Here again, the temptation is a desire to do something that is contrary to one's goals, and not necessarily a desire to do something that is *sinful*. Of course, if one has a goal of not being sinful, or values not being sinful, then these understandings of temptation will explain why sinfulness is often referenced in understandings of temptation—many temptations we face are precisely those that offend against our goal of being good people. But not-being-sinful is not the only goal one could have such that a desire that interferes with that goal could count as a temptation.[26]

This view, that sin is not integral to temptation, appears contentious in theological writings. Some authors write as if, for a desire to count as a temptation, it must be a desire for something sinful. This is ambiguous. It can be read to say that the desire has to be for something that is sinful, under the aspect of sinfulness. That is too much, though. When someone who has promised to quit smoking feels the craving or temptation for a cigarette, the object of temptation is *the cigarette* or *smoking a cigarette*. The object of temptation is not *the sinful act of smoking a cigarette*. When a scoundrel feels a temptation to steal money from the poor box, the temptation is *for that money* and not *for the sinful act*. There may be cases where someone desires something precisely because it is sinful—Milton's Satan, and his "Evil, be thou my good" spring to mind—but the majority of everyday cases, with everyday people, are cases where the object is not desired because it is sinful, but rather because it is, as Hofmann et al. write above, associated with pleasure or relief of discomfort.[27]

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[26] Cf. Milyavskaya et al. (2015, 680). A third recent psychology article explains temptations as "objects that have already elicited a sense of craving or desire" (Van Dillen, Papies, and Hofmann 2013, 428). A fourth paraphrases temptation as "maladaptive impulse" (Galla and Duckworth 2015, 510).

[27] Even Satan desires evil to be his good, not because it is sin, but, as the text makes clear, because it is a means to something he views as pleasurable: "Evil, be thou my good; by thee at least | Divided empire with Heaven's King I hold, | By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign; | As Man ere long, and this new world, shall know" (*Paradise Lost*, bk IV). Evil is desired as a means by which he will attain the souls he wishes to reign over. Perhaps a better example of willing something evil just because it is evil is Sturch's (1991, 263) example of grown men

It is not hard to find authors who write in ways that are unclear as to whether sin itself is the target of temptation. For instance, John McKinley defines temptation thus:

> Temptation is the internal struggle among a person's beliefs and desires within a particular setting of external circumstances and *pulls* the person to sin as its target.   (McKinley 2009, 288)

Elsewhere he (McKinley 2009, 272) writes: "Simply stated, temptation is the enticement to evil." Here I think that we need to be careful. *Sin* need not be the target of temptation. Sure, the target may, in fact, be sinful. But the pull, in all or almost all cases, is not toward sin properly so called. It is to some pleasure or lack of discomfort.

Neither the psychological work on temptation, nor a plausible philosophical analysis of temptation require *sin* or *evil* to be the explicit, willed target in a case of temptation. In addition, the psychological work on temptation does not require the object of temptation to be sinful or evil *at all*. As Stephen Wellum (2016, 234) puts it in our context, Jesus was tempted "in terms of normal *sinless* human weakness."

In the next part of this section, I will consider whether one can be tempted to do something that one cannot do, all things considered, even if one knows that fact. I will argue that one can be tempted in such a case, given the above psychological account of what temptation is.

Bartel raises a worry about temptation for those who know they cannot succumb to it:

> [I]f Christ is both essentially sinless and permanently omniscient, it is difficult to see how he could be tempted to sin—or at least it is difficult to see how he could be tempted as we are. For when we are tempted to do what is morally wrong, we do not infallibly know that we shall choose the good no matter what.
> (Bartel 1995, 154)

Does Christ's knowledge that he will infallibly choose the good no matter what, supposing he has such knowledge, preclude the possibility of temptation? Not on the account I consider in this section, drawing from the psychologists. For temptation is the result of appetitive cravings. No mere knowledge that one will prevail is sufficient to deaden appetitive cravings (though it may well help in coping with those appetitive cravings). Even when the temptation comes from a tempter enticing one to an action, that temptation still requires the allure of appetitive cravings. One can tempt a hungry man to reveal some confidential information for the sake of a piece of stale bread. But one cannot likewise tempt a miserably stuffed man to do the

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"caught breaking glass into a children's paddling-pool." Even there, though, one suspects that there was some grotesque pleasure viewed as a good which motivated the deplorable men.

same. The external tempter, to tempt at all, must align the offered enticement with the appetitive urges of the enticed. Gondreau notes that St Thomas thinks similarly when discussing the temptation of Christ by the devil:

> Aquinas propounds the view…that the devil's tempting influences proceed nowhere without the presentation of an object which, though illicit according to reason and the higher human good, is yet perceived by the senses as *desirable* and good—and desirability, or appetibility, implies an *already initiated* affective inclination to the object in question.
>
> (Gondreau 2018, 326, emphasis in the original)

Here we see that Aquinas, too, claims that the object of an attempted temptation, to actually tempt, must be something to which the appetites are already drawn.

Think of a case where you believe that God told you that you would face a trial, a temptation, but that you would persevere through it. The Lord says, "You will face a hard battle. You will come to the very cusp of your self-control, but you will persevere through the temptation, with my grace." You believe as strongly as you believe anything that God spoke to you. Then you get into the situation. Say, you are locked in a room for two days with delicious, fragrant foods, yet you must fast the whole time. Your appetites work something fierce. You sweat, shake, and cry, but you don't give in. People, both malicious and well-meaning, encourage you to eat the food in myriad ways. Given that you know you will choose the good—given that you are maximally confident that God told you so, and that God is not a liar—does it follow that you didn't undergo temptation? No. For the appetitive cravings that are part of temptation are not under our volitional control, no matter what we know.[28]

One might balk at the previous example. One might think that if one has good reason to believe that one cannot do something, then however strong the craving is, one cannot be tempted to do it.[29] Suppose by some weird appetitive malfunction I feel an overwhelming desire to leap to the moon. And suppose that I know that I can't actually do so. We'd not naturally think that I was tempted to leap to the moon, whatever else we thought of me. The case, it might seem, is relevantly analogous to Jesus' situation.

In reply, this moon case is helpful to me, but I don't see it as relevantly analogous, for two reasons. First, I don't see it as a case where my craving is contrary to my distal goals, as I claim, following the psychologists I cite, it would need to be in order to qualify as a temptation. Second, it is disanalogous

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[28] Did you think that God's two-sentence speech, all by itself, was incoherent? If not, then you didn't think that temptation was inconsistent with infallible knowledge that someone won't succumb to it.

[29] I thank a reader for this objection and the following example, which I take verbatim from the comments I received on the manuscript of this book.

because I don't, with my natural capacities, have all that it takes to leap to the moon. But suppose leaping to the moon *is* contrary to my distal goals. Maybe because I have a goal to see my kids grow up, and I wouldn't live to see that if I leapt outside Earth's atmosphere. And suppose that I did naturally have the capacities to do so, as Christ naturally has the capacities required to sin in virtue of his human nature. Then I *would* view the case as a case of temptation. My point: when you make the case *really* relevantly analogous, I think it is a case of temptation.

Temptation, then, on the model of temptation under discussion in this section, does not require that the object of temptation be sinful, and it doesn't require that the object be desired *as sinful*. Moreover, temptation does not require the one tempted to be able, all things considered, to fulfill the craving. Even if Christ knows his divine identity and knows that he cannot sin, that alone is insufficient to render him unable to crave for food when hungry, or undesirous of safety when threatened with torturous death.

Consider a classical breakdown of appetitive powers, most broadly divided.[30] I won't argue for the breakdown here; I'll simply use it as a helpful heuristic. We see in the first quotation from Hofmann et al. above a divide between desires for pleasure and desires to avoid the uncomfortable. That appetite, traditionally, which pulls toward the pleasurable and away from the not-pleasurable, is known as the *concupiscible* appetite, which must be distinguished from what the tradition has called "concupiscence."[31] The concupiscible appetite (or power), as I understand it here, is not only aimed at sensible and bodily pleasures in rational creatures such as humans.[32] Gossiping, for instance, can be quite pleasant, which is why it is sometimes described as "delicious" or "savory." Similarly, the (vain)glory desired in prideful desires is desired as pleasurable.

In addition to the concupiscible appetite, we have an appetite to resist things that appear onerous, or dangerous, or difficult. That appetite, traditionally, is known as the *irascible* appetite. Finally, we have an appetite for what we intellectually judge to be a good thing. This appetite, traditionally, is known as the *will* or *intellectual appetite*. The two lower appetites (concupiscible and

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[30] For one typical discussion of this classical breakdown, see Aquinas's *ST* I q.81.

[31] The mainstay of the Christian tradition is quite vocal that Christ had no concupiscence. But the tradition does not teach that he had no concupiscible appetite. On the contrary, Christ felt hunger and thirst, which are both actions of the concupiscible appetite, on this traditional distinction. The concupiscence that Christ lacked was not this appetite, but rather a sinful misalignment of that appetite and others. See, for instance, Catechism of the Catholic Church (2000, para. 2515).

[32] It is true that one finds the concupiscible power discussed in thinkers such as Aquinas as being ordered by temperance. And temperance is chiefly concerned with "sensible and bodily" goods, and, in particular, the goods of the sense of touch (see, for instance, *ST* II-II q.141 a.3; a.5). But temperance also has as a part virtues such as nobility (*ST* II-II q.145), and the urge to act ignobly need not be an appetitive pull toward a bodily pleasure.

irascible) often conflict with our doing what we think we should, as when we feel the allure of the French fries we smell, though we think we've eaten enough food. Or when, seeing the goodness of protecting someone vulnerable, we feel the repulsion of conflict, or fear of bodily injury. Sometimes the lower appetites join forces, as when we vow to jog in the morning, only to face both the loss of the pleasant warmth of bed and the resultant blisters and muscle ache. It is important to note that the appetitive pull toward food when hungry, or drink when thirsty, or sleep when weary, etc., is a natural thing, since these are the natural objects of these appetites. Likewise, the appetitive repulsion from something dangerous is a natural thing.[33]

Christ, too, was subject to appetitive urges. In scripture, he is hungry, thirsty, weary, anxious, etc. As Alfeyev notes of Orthodox theology:

> According to the teaching of the Byzantine fathers, especially Maximus the Confessor and John of Damascus, Christ was a participant in the "natural and innocent passions," though he was devoid of sinful passion by nature.
>
> (Alfeyev 2012, 283)

Of these innocent passions, John of Damascus (1958, 323–4) writes:

> Now, those passions are natural and blameless which are not under our control and have come into man's life as a result of the condemnation occasioned by his fall. Such, for example, were hunger, thirst, fatigue, pain, the tears, the destruction, the shrinking from death, the fear, the agony . . . and any other such things as are naturally inherent in all men.

Arendzen (1941, 192) writes of the Catholic position of Christ's internal state while in the Garden of Gethsemane, "He was filled with fear and apprehension, repugnance, horror and aversion, sadness and depression."[34]

One might think that such urges or feelings are contrary to Christ's state of virtue, since his virtue, even in his human nature, was supreme.[35] That's a faulty view of virtue. Virtue does not remove the appetites. To be courageous is not to feel no fear; to be temperate is not to feel no hunger pains. The appetitive virtues, rather than masking the appetites, are habits by which we deal with the appetites appropriately. This is what Christ has and what Christ does.

Consider an example. If you make a Lenten vow to eat but one small meal a day on Wednesdays during Lent, and at 8pm, hours after your small meal, you are famished, you will feel a strong appetitive urge for food. Such an urge will lodge itself in the front of your mind's eye. You try to read but your

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[33] Leftow (2014, 14) makes these same points about these appetitive pulls being natural.

[34] For how Aquinas understands the fear felt by Christ, see Schrader (2017).

[35] For a discussion of the relation between impeccability and perfect virtue, see Henderson (2016).

consciousness is continually brought back to the screaming appetite. This appetitive craving moves you, pulls you, toward eating.[36] But you see eating as inconsistent with your distal goals. There is nothing sinful about feeling this appetite. It is a natural human appetite. If you weren't to feel it, we'd think something was wrong with you. Go to the doctor (or stop eating so much) if your body never gives you hunger pains.

Likewise for Christ. He feels, with his assumed human appetites, a natural appetite to avoid his forthcoming excruciating death. That appetitive pull lodges itself in his (human) psyche. That appetitive craving pulls him toward rationally desiring (with his human will) to avoid the whole ordeal. Such a choice, however, is contrary to his distal goals. Thus, we have all the components required for temptation here. But where is the need for an ability to sin? Not in feeling the appetites. Not in seeing satisfying those appetites as a reason for action. Not in noticing such action conflicts with his distal goals.

Even if we assume that Christ knew all that would befall him while in the garden, prior to his confrontation with his capturers (cf. John 18:4), this additional knowledge wouldn't need to lessen the temptation he experienced. Again, one can be certain that he will not sin, wouldn't even be able to sin, without that certainty alleviating the felt appetitive pangs, which are not under volitional or intellectual control. Those pangs can be seen as reason to do something, and that thing be seen as contrary to his distal goals, even without the person believing that he is able to sin.

While I claim that there is nothing morally amiss about the sort of craving discussed in the previous paragraphs, there are types of craving that are morally amiss. For, we are sometimes tempted by or for things that are themselves intrinsically sinful. And we are sometimes tempted in certain ways because of our own cultivated sinful dispositions. Oliver Crisp (2007b, 176) distinguishes types of temptations in a useful way as follows:

> [T]he moral quality that differentiates a sinful from an innocent temptation has to do with the fact that a sinful temptation is itself morally culpable, irrespective of whether or not a person yields to it and actually sins.[37]

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[36] Here and elsewhere I write of the appetitive craving moving a person. Two notes on this. First, one might think that it isn't the craving itself, but rather the *desire to satisfy the craving* that moves one. Originally, I wrote of "the appetitive craving, or the satisfaction of the craving," but I was told that such continuous disjunctions are distracting. Hence this footnote: if you think that it is really the desire to satisfy the craving that moves one, then feel free to substitute that in. Second, I write of the desire "moving" you. That language isn't perfect. One might think instead of the craving giving reason to act. But "reason" is an act of the intellect, not a result of an appetite. Perhaps I should write of craving as "incentivizing" action, or "pulling" one towards the action.

[37] In a similar vein, Brewer (2002, 104) writes, "What I will argue is that our moral character is impugned by desires to act immorally only when those desires manifest a lack of conviction in moral values or principles."

Even feeling the pull of temptation toward certain actions (insert your own deplorable examples) evinces a corrupt state of character.[38]

According to the view put forward in this section, in temptation, one feels an appetitive pull toward something perceived as pleasurable or in opposition to something difficult or dangerous. That appetitive craving, or perhaps satisfying that craving, is seen as reason to act in a certain way. But that way of acting is recognized as contrary to an agent's goals or values, and hence seen as not how one should act in the situation. The pull in such a circumstance is a temptation, and is not itself sinful, unless consented to, delighted in, or produced by a sinful state. On such an understanding of temptation, temptation need not imply the ability to sin. Thus, the proponent of this view of temptation is free to deny the truth of the first premise of the Temptation Argument. The Temptation Argument, then, is no reason to reject the extension of Conciliar Christology which conjoins Conciliar Christology and the Impeccability Thesis.

V. CAN SOMETHING BE PECCABLE AND IMPECCABLE?

In Section IV I argued that Premise 1 of the argument from temptation is false. It is false, I argued, because temptation, when properly understood, doesn't require its object to be sinful, and it doesn't require the ability to sin. In this section I want to take a different approach. Even if Premise 1 is false, there still might be reason, as I go on to give in Section V.a, to think that there is a sense in which Christ is peccable. Is there a way in which one interested in saving the consistency of Conciliar Christology and the affirmation that Christ is impeccable can grant that Christ is peccable, and yet retain consistency? In Section V.b I discuss a means by which one may attempt just that.

V.a. Christ's Powers and the Ability to Sin

Christ took on the entire human condition, except sin. He was like us in all ways. So, the reasoning goes, every power had by humans in virtue of being human was had by Christ, too. But we have the power to sin. Thus, so does Christ. Therefore, Christ is peccable.

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[38] Calvin (2013, Matt. 4:8) seems to think, too, that while Christ felt the passions mundane humans feel, he did not experience "irregular appetites." I thank Sabrina Little for this reference. Another useful distinction between types of temptation has to do with their source. Both Aquinas (2013, bk 4, lecture 1, p. 101) and Crisp (2007d, 178) argue that the temptations of Christ must find their "suggestion" or be "generated" by things external to Christ.

It appears to me that many people discussing impeccability think that there is something we can call *the power to sin*. We see this most clearly in the articles that argue that God cannot be both omnipotent and impeccable, since to be omnipotent is to have all power, and an impeccable being lacks the power to sin.[39] We also see it in the current debate. For instance, Canham (2000, 96–7) writes of an *exercise* of peccability: "the exercise of his human attribute of peccability apparently limited the exercise of His divine attribute of impeccability."

It seems to me, though, that there is no power to sin, properly so called. Rather, there is, for instance, the power to eat, or the power to drink, or the power to walk (and perhaps even these are too coarse-grained). These are powers that we can use poorly or well. We eat poorly when we overeat, for instance. Consider gluttonous Jim, who receives a red velvet cake. He takes a bite of it, employing some subset of his powers. He takes another bite, and another. As he goes from being hungry to being satisfied, to being miserably full, to being sick, at no point does some new power, the power to sin, begin to be activated. Rather, the same powers are employed throughout his hour of binge-eating.[40] It isn't that at bite ten the power to sin starts warming up, then at bite twenty it engages. But then if there is no power to sin, properly so called, the capacity to sin discussed in the impeccability literature ought not to be understood as the having or lacking of a particular power.[41]

While the fact that there is no power to sin, as such, is helpful for the purposes of responding to the argument for Christ's peccability outlined in the first paragraph of this subsection, it does not completely answer the charge that Christ is peccable due to what he assumed. Even if Christ, like all of us, doesn't have something we can call the power to sin, properly so called, he still has all the basic human powers that you or I have when we sin. And if powers are what make the claims of potentiality true, and my powers make it true that I can sin, then Christ's powers should make it true that he can sin.[42] Thus, again, we have reason to believe that he is peccable. He has, in a dispositional sense, the powers required to sin. What is lacking in his abilities here?

To see the same point from another angle, consider the following scenario. Suppose for a moment that God has given us a big warehouse full of powers. We see bins labeled "power to run," "power to laugh," etc. What would we

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[39] For discussion of such arguments, see, for example, Gellman (1977), Morris (1983), Brümmer (1984), Carter (1985), Funkhouser (2006).

[40] Likely some non-volitional powers become activated after a time. His insulin will spike, for instance, and that is caused by some power that he has. But given that sin is of the will, these non-voluntary powers will not be relevant to the supposed power to sin.

[41] Morris (1986, 167) makes this point, too. Likewise, McKinley (2009, 258) writes "Peccability is no power, but a shortcoming."

[42] For more on powers making true claims of possibility, see Pawl (2008, chap. 4) and Pawl (2017a).

have to add to Christ to get him able—in the power sense of the word—to sin? It seems to me that the answer here is "nothing." There is no additional power on a shelf in the warehouse such that we can add it to Christ and cause him to gain the ability to sin. He already has all the human powers I have. I can attest—I need no witnesses, but I can surely call many—those powers are sufficient for sinning. If there is no such thing as a power to sin, and Christ has all the relevant powers you or I have in virtue of which we can sin, why not say he is able to sin? The question here is how much weight the words "able" and "can" are supporting.

We use "can" and "able" in many senses, depending on the context of utterance. Following an example of Crisp (2007d, 175), we say that a piece of wood submerged in a swimming pool is unable to be set alight. Narrowly understood, in its particular circumstance, it cannot be done. But there's a broader sense: it is possible that the wood be set alight. It is still the sort of thing that, because of its nature, is able to be burned. Dry it out for a few days and it is able to be burned. Were you and I to argue about whether the stick in the pool is really inflammable, the best strategy for us would be to settle the sense we have in mind. For it could be that we are in agreement, even with our contrary utterances. And even if we disagree, we will have more clarity in the discussion once the terms are defined.

Likewise, when we say that Christ is unable to sin, or able to sin, what is the sense of the term? What is the context in question? Here, the question is vexed, insofar as the subject of the assertion is the Second Person of the Trinity. The traditional view is that no matter what circumstances that person is in, he will not sin. So, the Son case and the wood case are disanalogous, insofar as the wood, in certain circumstances, will burn, yet the Son, in no circumstance, will sin. On the other hand, being *able* to sin might just require having the powers a thing needs to sin. And Christ might well have those, insofar as he is human.[43]

V.b. The Aptness Conditions for the Predicates, "Peccable" and "Impeccable"

Some thinkers in the debates over the impeccability of Christ have claimed, on the face of it contradictorily, that Christ is *both* peccable and impeccable. For instance, Michael Canham writes:

In this writer's view, both the peccability and impeccability positions when viewed as mutually exclusive fail in appealing to the humanity or deity of Christ to support their respective positions. To ask the question, "Was Christ peccable or impeccable in His incarnation?" is like asking the question, "Is Jesus Christ God or Man?" The answer to both questions is "yes." That Jesus Christ in His

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[43] Crisp (2007d, 180–1) makes the same point.

incarnation possessed both attributes (peccability and impeccability) and that He exercised them in keeping with the will of His heavenly Father is better.

(Canham 2000, 108)

Here Canham asserts that Christ was both peccable and impeccable during his incarnation. The phrase "during his incarnation" precludes a kenotic rendering of the text, according to which Christ might be impeccable and peccable at different times.[44]

The question of whether something can be both peccable and impeccable has many similarities to other questions Christians must face. How can Christ be both passible and impassible, or mutable and immutable, or omnipotent and limited in power, or omniscient and limited in knowledge, etc. The present question can seem like just one more example of that question, and so might well be answered in the affirmative by employing the same tools used to answer the other questions in the affirmative.[45]

Depending on how one understands the terms "peccable" and "impeccable," a statement such as Canham's at the beginning of this subsection seems flatly contradictory.[46] Impeccability and peccability are very often understood in the following way:[47]

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[44] I am tempted to cite Ivor Davidson here as well, when he says: (Davidson 2008, 395): "Is Jesus sinless in that he cannot sin (*non posse peccare*), or sinless in that he in fact does not sin (*posse non peccare*)? On the former account, he is necessarily incapable of sinning in so far as he is God the Son incarnate; on the latter, he must be capable of sinning in principle, even if he does not sin in practice, in so far as he is truly human and his humanity is one with our own. In terms of the New Testament's witness, it is simply true to say both that this one is God the Son incarnate and that he is vulnerably human. As God the Son, he has to be incapable of sinning, for he shares in the perfect being and will of God the Father. At the same time, as God the Son incarnate he lives a human life, in which he has decisions to make about what it means to follow his Father's will in the world." Here it seems Davidson argues that since Christ is God the Son, he is impeccable. But since he is also truly human, that means "he must be capable of sinning in principle."

Another example is found in the work of Millard Erickson. Erickson (1996, 555) writes: "Rather than suggest that God gave up certain attributes of divinity as well as certain attributes of humanity in becoming incarnate (for this is a sort of double kenosis), I prefer to emphasize that what he did in the incarnation was to add something to each nature, namely, the attributes of the other nature." I do not know how to make meaningful sense out of this assertion. It reads as if the human nature takes on divine attributes, such as omnipresence and necessity, and the divine nature takes on human attributes, such as ignorance and hunger. But, were there a way of making sense of such a view from within traditional Christianity, and were the divine nature impeccable and the human nature peccable, then Erickson would be committed to the claim that the one person Christ is both peccable and impeccable. Moreover, each nature, on this view, would also be both peccable and impeccable, however that might work.

[45] To see some recent discussions of these ways, see: Pawl (2014a, 2015, 2016c, 2016e, chaps 4–7).

[46] His own view (Canham 2000, 111–12) is that it is an antinomy, which he understands as an apparent contradiction that is unavoidable and not solvable.

[47] In this Section I follow the same procedure in discussing peccability and impeccability that I followed in previous publications when discussing passibility and impassibility. See (Pawl 2014a, 2016e, chap. 7).

<u>Initial Truth Conditions:</u>[48]

Peccable: *s* is peccable just in case *s* is able to sin.
Impeccable: *s* is impeccable just in case it is not the case that *s* is able to sin.

On these definitions of the terms—one of which I used earlier in my formalization of the Temptation Argument—it is not possible for one thing to be both peccable and impeccable. For no statement can be both true and false at the same time in the same way. But that is what would happen were Christ both peccable and impeccable on these definitions, since the right side of each biconditional truth condition would follow, and those right sides are contradictory opposites.[49]

Perhaps, then, we should understand the terms in a different way. Maybe it would be better to understand them as follows:

<u>Revised Truth Conditions:</u>

Peccable: *s* is peccable just in case *s* has a concrete nature such that it is possible that *s* sin by means of that nature.
Impeccable: *s* is impeccable just in case *s* has a concrete nature such that it is not possible that *s* sin by means of that nature.[50]

The revised definition of peccability is a good start for those who intend to affirm both peccability and impeccability of Christ. But I think it will fail because it keeps "*s*," the possessor of the nature, in the right-hand side of the definition. It would be better to say that *s* has a concrete nature by means of which it is possible that *someone* sin. For were Christ's human nature not assumed, it would fulfill the conditions for being a human person, just like you or me. And that human person would be able to sin. So, someone—that person—could have that nature, and by means of that nature, sin.

The reader might be surprised to hear that Christ's human nature, if unassumed, would fulfill the conditions required to be a supposit, and hence

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[48]   McKinley (2009, 3) defines these terms similarly, saying: "Impeccability refers to the absolute inability of a person to commit sin or, alternately, the person cannot fail to do right . . . Peccability, means that a person is vulnerable to sin (he may fail to do right acts). A peccable person is mutable, but may be contingently good while remaining sinless."

[49]   Canham defines the terms as follows: "able not to sin" (*potuit non peccare*, peccability), "not able to sin" (*non potuit peccare*, impeccability). Defined like this, it turns out that the terms are not straightforwardly contradictory. The way he sets up the dialectic, though, makes it clear that he believes the advocates of the opposing views see their views as inconsistent. Moreover, his arguments for peccability conclude to the claim that Christ is able to sin, not merely that he is able not to sin. So I think Canham means peccability to imply both able not to sin and able to sin. In which case the terms are incompatible.

[50]   Some readers have thought that "with" clauses would be more intuitive than the "by means of" clauses in these revised truth conditions and the revised revised truth conditions below. By my lights, I don't see anything lost if the reader interprets them as such.

a person. This view, though, is not as scandalous as it might sound. For instance, Aquinas writes:

> As long as the human nature is united to the Word of God, it does not have its own suppositum or hypostasis beyond the person of the Word, because it does not exist in itself. But if it were separated from the Word, it would have, not only its own hypostasis or suppositum, but also its own person; because it would now exist per se. Just as also a part of a composite body, as long as it is undivided from the whole, is [i.e., exists per se] only potentially, not actually; but this is only brought about by separation.   (Aquinas n.d., *De Unione Verbi*, a. 2, ad 10.)

Here Aquinas claims that the assumed nature, if it were separated from the Word, would exist per se, and so would fulfill the conditions for being a supposit and a person. This makes sense, given the medieval definition of "supposit" that I gave in Chapter 1, Section V.a. There I noted that the one reason why the assumed human nature doesn't fulfill the conditions for being a supposit is that it is sustained by another thing. If that nature were separated from the Word, it would no longer be sustained by another, and so would fulfill the conditions for being a supposit. And it is a rational nature, so it would fulfill the conditions for being a person, too.

Similarly, Crisp says, and I agree:

> Were it possible to decouple Christ's human nature from the hypostatic union (a controversial idea, to be sure) then possibly, the human nature that had been the human nature of the Word of God would form a supposit—a human person—and may then sin.   (Crisp 2007d, 181)[51]

Both Crisp and Aquinas discuss the possibility of the assumed nature existing unassumed and thus being a person. And Crisp goes one step further to claim that the resultant person could sin. Since that person would have but one nature (we are supposing that it is separated from the Word, but not that it is given a second nature) it would be able to sin in virtue of that nature. Thus, that person would fulfill the Revised conditions for being peccable. Notice that Crisp and Aquinas speak of "decoupling" or "separating" the human nature from the divine nature. Such decoupling or separating need not be understood in a temporal sense, as if CHN could go from being assumed to being unassumed.[52] Instead, we can make

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[51] In addition, Ullmann (1870, 257) and Adams (1999, 19) cite Lombard as affirming that the soul of Christ, removed from the incarnation, would be capable of sinning. McKinley (2009, 161–2) writes: "Scotus boldly admits that Christ's humanity was able to sin but became transformed to be not able to sin as an effect of the beatific vision (not simply by incarnational union): 'I say that the nature which he assumed was of itself peccable and able to sin, because it was not beatified by reason of its union and it had free will, and thus was able to choose in either of two ways. But it was because of beatitude that it was confirmed in the first instant so that it became impeccable in the same way as the other blessed [in glory] are impeccable.'"

[52] Aquinas argues that grace is only removed by sin. Since Christ cannot sin, a human nature, once united, could not lose the grace of union and so could not be separated from the

the same logical points if we think of the decoupling and separating in a modal sense, that is, if we think of the human nature assumed by Christ, in a different created order, existing but never being assumed. In such a case, it would be able to sin.

Changing the right side of both biconditionals from saying "*s*" to saying "someone" will not be problematic for the impeccability biconditional. For the divine nature, too, is not only possibly had by many; on traditional Christian theism, it *is* in fact had by many—three persons, to be exact. No one of those three persons, on this view, in virtue of having the divine nature, has a nature by which someone could be able to sin. Thus, the revised truth conditions can be revised yet again, to say:

Revised Revised Truth Conditions:

Peccable: *s* is peccable just in case *s* has a concrete nature such that it is possible that someone sin by means of that nature.

Impeccable: *s* is impeccable just in case *s* has a concrete nature such that it is not possible that someone sin by means of that nature.

On these definitions of the terms, they are not inconsistent. For one person can have two natures, one of which is such that, when had by some person or other, that person would be able to sin by means of it, and the other is such that no matter who had it, he or she would not be able to sin by means of it. In fact, provided that Christ's human nature could have existed unassumed, both of these conditions are true of Christ.

I don't claim that these definitions are common in the traditional discussion. So far as I know, no one has put the definitions in quite these terms (though I'd be interested to find someone who did). We can ask, though, whether these definitions are materially adequate in all non-incarnational cases. Supposing a domain of all non-incarnation cases, is it true that if something is peccable in the initial sense, then it is peccable in the revised revised sense, and vice versa? And likewise, for impeccable? I believe it is true.

Consider mere humans. All mere humans are capable of sinning. Adam and Eve, mere humans the both of them, were capable of sinning. Even on Roman Catholic theology, it is not necessarily the case that Mary "the God-bearer without blemish," as Second Nicaea calls her, was incapable of sinning.[53] So with respect to non-incarnation cases on the creature side, the initial and revised revised truth conditions are co-extensive: Mary and Eve both are able

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divine nature. See *ST* III q.50 a.2 resp., and my discussion of this passage in Chapter 4, Section IV.a.

[53] See Tanner (1990, 134–5).

to sin (initial) and they both have a nature such that someone with that nature could sin (revised revised).

Consider a divine person that is not incarnate, say, the Father. The Father has a divine nature, and that nature is such that, no matter who has it, that person is not able to sin by means of it. The initial and revised revised conditions of impeccability, then, are equally met by the Father and Holy Spirit. Neither is capable of sinning (initial), and neither has a nature such that someone who has that nature can sin with it (revised revised).

I can think of no non-incarnational case in which the initial and revised revised understandings of the terms disagree on whether something is aptly called "peccable" or "impeccable." The *only* case in which the revised revised truth conditions and the initial truth conditions will disagree is in an incarnational case. Because of that, any examples drawn from non-incarnational cases will not be examples that can help us decide between the viable contenders for truth conditions. For, both truth conditions will agree on all such examples whether the thing in question is peccable or impeccable. We will find no reason, then, to prefer one or the other of these sets of truth conditions from non-incarnational examples.

I conclude here, then, that the revised revised truth conditions are viable for those who wish to affirm both that Christ was peccable and that he was impeccable. In doing so, one opens up another way of arguing that the objection to the extension of Conciliar Christology discussed in this chapter is false. Premise 4 states, the reader will recall, that "if a person is capable of sinning (peccable), then that person is not impeccable." Given the revised revised truth conditions of impeccability and peccability, this premise is false. Christ is a counterexample, given those truth conditions.

V.c. Objections and Questions

In this Section I will consider some worries and objections to the use of the revised revised truth conditions as a way of answering the argument discussed in this chapter.

V.c.1. What is the Scope of "s" in the Truth Conditions?

One might wonder here about the scope of things that ought to be allowed to substitute in for "*s*." "Impeccable" is a predicate that is reserved, in its standard usage, for things with wills. For, as standardly understood, to sin requires a will, either to consent to what one ought not do, or to omit to will what one ought to will. Rocks are unable to sin, owing to their lack of will. But we don't, or only cheekily, say of rocks that they are impeccable.

Is "impeccable" more narrowly reserved only for persons? I think not. For, very many in the debates throughout the centuries have predicated the terms "impeccable" and "peccable" of Christ's divine and human natures. The divine nature is characterized as impeccable in some cases. For instance, Oliver Crisp (2007b, 169) notes that William Shedd claims the divine nature to be impeccable. The assumed, human nature of Christ likewise is predicated by these terms. Some thinkers believe it to be peccable, others impeccable.

Christ's human nature is characterized as either peccable or impeccable, depending on the author. For instance, Canham (2000, 107), Crisp (2007d, 175), and Edersheim (1899, 299) call the human nature of Christ peccable. Crisp (2007d, 175) cites Gregory Nazianzus and John of Damascus as agreeing that Christ's human nature is capable of sinning.[54] Lonergan writes (2016, 719) that "[e]veryone grants that human nature is capable of sin and thus the reason for impeccability in Christ was not his assumed nature as nature." On the other hand, Fr Pohle (1913, 213) claims that Christ, as man, was incapable of sinning. Likewise, Richard Cross (2005, 255) cites Aquinas as claiming that the assumed human nature is impeccable. Adams (1999, 13, 75) reports that Anselm and Scotus both held that the human nature of Christ is impeccable. Fisk (2007, 324) claims that the human nature of Christ, according to Jonathan Edwards, was impeccable.[55] McKinley (2009, 252) writes that impeccability is an attribute of both the divine and human natures.[56] Pannenberg writes:

> The decision was finally made, in the same sense as the Council of Constantinople in 553 (Denzinger, 224), for the assumption of an inability to sin (*impeccabilitas*) in Jesus' human nature that existed from the very beginning. This inability to sin was not attributed to his human nature as such, nor derived directly from the hypostatic union . . . it was interpreted as a gracious sinlessness, which apparently left the ability to be tempted and the meritorious capacity of Jesus' human will untouched.   (Pannenberg 1968, 359)

It is clear, then, that referring to the natures as peccable or impeccable is not foreign to the tradition. To answer the question in the heading of this section, then: things with wills, either persons or merely natures, can be called impeccable or peccable.

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[54] He cites Gregory Nazianzus, *Oratio* 29.20, and John of Damascus, *De Fide Orthodoxa* 3.18.

[55] Origen might have held this view as well: "It must be believed, therefore, that there was in Christ a human and rational soul, without thinking of it as having had any inclination or possibility of sinning." (Origen, *The Fundamental Doctrines* 2,6,5, quoted from (Jurgens 1970, 1:195).

[56] It is less clear whether Sturch would say that Christ's human will was peccable or impeccable. For instance, he (1991, 164) writes: "His human will was indeed capable of willing sin unless one took into consideration, as one should, the fact that he was also divine."

V.c.2. Must Natures have Natures, then?

How can one make sense of using the terms "peccable" and "impeccable" of natures, given the truth conditions I provided? For the divine nature doesn't, itself, have a nature by means of which it is not the case that someone could sin. But, given the revised revised truth conditions, that's precisely what is needed for something to count as impeccable. In other words, if we allow predicating "peccable" and "impeccable" of the natures, then this objection claims, we cannot use the revised revised truth conditions. But since I desire that the terms be allowed to be used in the contexts and ways they were traditionally used, but also desire to use the revised revised truth conditions, I have come to a contradiction.

A response: understand the "has a concrete nature" language in the aptness conditions for the terms as consistent with being identical to that nature. In mereology, an improper part is identical with the whole; likewise, one might say, a thing improperly had is identical with the thing had. If we understand the having of a nature in such a manner, this objection need not worry us. The divine nature fulfills the conditions for being impeccable by improperly having a nature that . . . The same sort of response would work for the human nature.[57]

V.c.3. What of Leftow's Bloody Hand?

Brian Leftow raises the following potent objection to the revised revised understanding of peccability.[58] Something shouldn't count as *able to x* simply because it has something such that, if something else were to have it, then *that other thing* could *x*. Consider Leftow's hand. If we were to cut it off his body, that thing, the hand, would be able to bleed out its back. But we shouldn't say that, in virtue of this fact, *Leftow* has the ability to bleed out the back of his hand in the same sort of way. We might even stipulate that the rate of flow and other features of the bleeding prevent just such an act of bleeding from occurring were the hand still attached. In such a case, where attachment to Leftow precludes his being able to bleed in this sort of way, we shouldn't count Leftow as being able to bleed in this particular manner, even if the hand, when severed from Leftow, could do such things.

So likewise, one might think, with the ability to sin. We shouldn't say that Christ has the ability to sin because he has something, his human nature, which, if he were to cease having it, it would be able to be had by another thing (a different person), who could then be able to sin with it. In such a case, where

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[57] To see this response in greater detail in the discussion of a similar case, see Pawl (2016e, 172–3).

[58] I thank Leftow for raising this objection at a talk I gave at Oriel College, Oxford.

attachment to the Word precludes his being able to sin, we shouldn't count the Word as being able to sin.

There is a sense in which I agree here. I do not want to count the Logos as *being able to sin* on account of his human nature. To do so would be to count him as peccable in the initial sense provided above, and I do not want to say that Christ is peccable in that sense. Thus, if Leftow here gives us good reason to think that we shouldn't call Christ "able to sin" because of his assumed human nature, I am happy to accept the reason, since I, too, do not want to say that Christ is "able to sin" or peccable *in the initial sense.*

Could the reasoning also be used to show that we shouldn't call Christ "peccable" in the revised revised sense, since, if we were to, we'd have to call Leftow able to bleed from the back of his hand? While I find the general line of analogy to be strong in most cases of having something, the case of having a nature by means of hypostatic union, I will argue, is relevantly dissimilar to the case of having a hand by natural means. If the reason for calling Christ "peccable" was merely that he has something that, if someone else had it, then that person could sin, I would see the strength of this analogy. That is, if the reasoning went like this:

5. If *x* has *y* and *z* could do A with *y*, then *x* could do A with *y*.
6. Christ has his human nature, and were some other person to have that nature, that other person could sin with it.
7. Thus, Christ could sin with that human nature.   (5, 6)

I'd see the force of the objection. For the objection targets Premise 5 and shows a counterexample to it when we apply it to Leftow, his hand, and its bleeding out the back. But there's another reason, applicable in the Christ case, but not in the hand case, for thinking that we ought to call Christ "peccable," given what his nature could be used for (or do) in other circumstances. That is, we can deny Premise 5 and also provide a principle which allows Christ to be called peccable in the revised revised sense, a principle that does not have the unfortunate entailment of Leftow being able to bleed out the back.

What is the principle? I have made mention of it before: whatever the truth conditions are for a predicate to be apt of a thing in non-incarnational cases, those same truth conditions are required for a thing to be called by that predicate in an incarnational case.[59] If, for instance, a person's having a body shaped in this particular way makes it correct for the term "sitting" to be said of him in a non-incarnational case (e.g., the case with me right now), then when the Word has a body shaped in this particular way, it is true to say that he is sitting.[60]

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[59] I've called this principle Typical Dependence elsewhere; see Pawl (2016e, 54–6; 62–5).

[60] Yes, dear reader, I know that body shape alone is insufficient for sitting. Were I to float in the lake in the same shape, I wouldn't be sitting in the lake. Spot me this one, please.

Now, in the case of Leftow's bleeding arm, his having a hand in the natural way does not fulfill the truth conditions required for him to be predicated by "is able to bleed out the back of his hand [in this sort of way]." But, on the revised revised understanding of peccability, his having a nature that someone could use for sin *is* sufficient for Leftow to be peccable. It follows that Christ, if he has such a nature, is also aptly predicable by that term. Conciliar Christology says he does have such a nature—as I noted at the beginning of this chapter, both scripture and councils claim that he is like us in all ways, sin alone excepted. Thus, there is a reason, applicable in the peccability case, but not in the hand case, for thinking that the predicate is apt in the former but not the latter. While Leftow's example shows that we shouldn't reason generally from a thing's having something that in other situations is able to *x*, to that thing can *x*, that moral doesn't also show us that the more specific reasoning—whatever the truth conditions are for a predicate to be apt of a thing in non-incarnational cases, those same truth conditions are required for a thing to be called by that predicate in an incarnational case—is also faulty.

In other words, Leftow's example shows us that we don't want to reason for all cases of having in the way he does in the hand case. I agree with that. What we need, then, is a certain type of having in which we can so reason, and then a principle for why we can reason that way. Here I have claimed that the certain type of having is having-in-a-hypostatic-union. The relevant principle is this: whatever the truth conditions are for a predicate to be apt of a thing in non-incarnational cases, those same truth conditions are required for a thing to be called by that predicate in an incarnational case.

VI. A SUMMARY APPLICATION OF THE APPARATUS OF THE CHAPTER

Given the logical structure of the revised revised definitions of the terms, and some distinctions drawn earlier, we may be able to reconcile all the apparently inconsistent affirmations of peccability and impeccability in the preceding paragraphs. Christ, the Second Person, is impeccable, since he has the divine nature in virtue of which he fulfills the aptness conditions for the term "impeccable." He is, we could say, impeccable qua divine, where the "qua"-clause there is used as an ontological laser pointer to designate that in virtue of which Christ fulfills the aptness conditions for "impeccable." That divine nature, too, improperly has a nature that fulfills the aptness conditions for being impeccable; namely, itself. Christ, that very same Second Person, is peccable, since he has an assumed, human nature in virtue of which he fulfills the aptness conditions for the term

"peccable." He is peccable qua human. His human nature, too, improperly fulfills those conditions.

Is there a sense in which the human nature is impeccable? There is, in a narrow sense of the term "impeccable." If we assume as a regulating principle that the domain of natures in question are *assumed* natures, then Christ's human nature fulfills the conditions for being impeccable. For, so long as we are considering it (or any other nature) only when assumed, on this narrow interpretation, there is no condition under which *someone* with that nature would be able to sin by means of it. For only divine persons can assume (in the relevant sense), and so only three someone's are available for consideration. Provided that no divine person could sin—and all the proponents of the claim that Christ's human nature is impeccable of which I am aware do affirm that no divine person could sin—then, given our regulating assumption that the nature is assumed, it is such that it is false that someone who has assumed it could sin by means of it. But then it fulfills the conditions for being predicated by "impeccable."[61]

Hence, if the foregoing aptness conditions for the terms "impeccable" and "peccable" are granted, many benefits follow. We can account for what Crisp (2007b, 183) calls "the classical notion that Christ was peccable *qua* human, whilst impeccable *qua* divine." We can build consensus among theologians about the incarnate God's attributes. Christ is both peccable and impeccable, in the revised revised sense of those terms. Moreover, we can answer the Temptation Argument; Premise 4 is false. For Christ, as both peccable and impeccable, would be a counterexample to the claim that if something is peccable then it is not impeccable. And thus, given these revised revised truth conditions, Premise 4 of the Temptation Argument can be denied.

A question remains as to whether the peccability theorists I've cited in this chapter would be content with the notion of peccability I've provided in this section. I expect that the answer to that question would differ depending on the reasons the thinker has for affirming divine peccability.

VII. CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have discussed an argument for the conclusion that Christ could not be both impeccable and tempted. I have discussed three replies to

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[61] Another option for securing the impeccability of Christ's human will is via Molinism, as has been explored by Thomas Flint (2001a, 2001b). Flint employs the Molinist's account of divine middle knowledge to show how God could "have arranged things in such a way that (i) CHN was placed in freedom-retaining circumstances (i.e. circumstances that left open to CHN the genuine option to sin, and yet (ii) CHN did not in fact sin in those circumstances" (Flint 2001b, 310).

that argument: two that deny Premise 1 of the argument (the epistemic response and a psychological response) and one that denies Premise 4 by defining "peccable" and "impeccable" such that they are consistent. The final two responses look promising to me and are consistent with Conciliar Christology. I conclude that the Temptation Argument does not show the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the Impeccability Thesis to be false.

Part 3

Intellectual Extensions

7

Christ's Knowledge in Relation to our Wills

I. INTRODUCTION

In this final part of the book, I will discuss extensions to Conciliar Christology that focus on the knowledge of Christ. Suppose Christ knew, via his human intellect, the future. Would that cause problems for our being free? Would it cause problems for his being free? In this chapter and Chapter 8, I discuss these questions, beginning with the question of our freedom.

The best way to see the problem that Christ's foreknowledge would cause for our freedom is to begin with the Standard Problem of God's foreknowledge and our freedom. One can put the Standard Problem of God's foreknowledge and human freedom as follows. If God foreknew that you are reading this chapter at this time, then you could not have done otherwise than read it. For suppose that 2,000 years ago God knew that at this moment you would be reading this chapter. Since God knew it, it must have been true 2,000 years ago. And since you don't have any control over how the world was 2,000 years ago, you have no power to make it otherwise than that, 2,000 years ago, it was true that you would be reading this chapter now. And since that truth entails your reading now, when the time came that was immediately prior to your reading this chapter, you could not but *tolle, lege*. This inability to do otherwise is not specific to your reading of this book; it permeates your whole life—and mine as well. A necessary condition for being free is being able to do otherwise at least once in one's life.[1] And so you (and I) are not free. Thus, foreknowledge precludes freedom.

The responses to the Standard Problem are many and well known. One might deny the claim that we cannot control the past, at least in certain

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[1] Recall that I am assuming the truth of incompatibilism in this book. In Chapter 5, Section III I give some justification for that assumption. The reasoning I give there is that such an assumption is useful to my opponent, since without assuming incompatibilism, the objection raised in this chapter would be easy to respond to. One simply denies this premise, that the ability to do otherwise is required at at least one point during one's life in order for one to be free. To provide dialectical traction for my opponent, I assume the truth of incompatibilism.

circumstances. Or one might deny that God has foreknowledge, strictly so called, either by denying the *knowledge* part, as the Open Theist does, or denying the *fore* part, as Aquinas does, along with many others.[2]

   On Aquinas's view, it is not the case that, 2,000 years ago, God (then) knew that you would be reading this chapter (now). God eternally knows, in his timeless present, that you read this chapter at this point. But just as the present knowledge of a temporal observer who now sees what you are doing does not preclude your freedom, so likewise, the Eternity reply goes, neither does the eternally present knowledge of an atemporal observer preclude your freedom.

   Aquinas affirms that Christ knew in his human intellect—the intellect he assumed when he became incarnate, which he had in addition to his divine intellect—all things past, present, and future. In fact, at one point Aquinas says that *everyone* thinks this. He writes:

> It is possible for a created intellect which sees God to know all that God knows with His knowledge of vision. All hold this is true of the soul of Christ . . . Consequently, the soul of Christ, which sees God more perfectly than all other creatures do, is said to know all things, present, past, and future.
>
> (Aquinas 1954, *QDV* q.8 a.4 resp.)

Note that Aquinas here says that the *soul* knows all things. His more careful statement of this sort of claim is that the *person* knows through, or by means of, the soul.[3] If Aquinas is right here, if Christ knew all things past, present, and future through his human intellect, then we have, at least in one sense, yet another problem of divine foreknowledge and freedom.[4] *Divine* because the knower is true God (and true man). *Foreknowledge* because 2,000 years ago there existed a created, temporal intellect which contained, at that time, the knowledge that you would be reading this chapter now.[5]

   The Eternity solution is silent on this Second Problem of divine foreknowledge and human freedom. This is because the soul of Christ is a temporal

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[2] For recent examples of the Eternity Solution, see Cobreros (2016), Leftow (1991, 2009), Rota (2010), and Stump and Kretzmann (1981, 1991). For recent discussions of open theism, see Hasker (1998), Oord, Hasker, and Zimmerman (2011), Rhoda (2007, 2008, 2011), Sanders (1998), and Tuggy (2007).

[3] See, for instance, Thomas Aquinas, *ST* I q.75 a.2 ad.2, where Aquinas says we could say that the soul understands things, but it is more proper to say that the man understands through the soul.

[4] If we name foreknowledge problems by the persons who have the foreknowledge, then, since Christ is divine, this is a problem of divine foreknowledge. If we name the problems by the intellects with which the person knows, then this is not a divine foreknowledge problem, since the intellect is not divine. I know of no naming conventions relative to this point.

[5] One might wonder whether it is apt to call part of Christ "a creature." Aquinas (1948, *Compendium of Theology*, number 216) writes concerning the created human intellect of Christ: "However, the hypostasis or person of the Word of God, which is one in two natures, is uncreated. For this reason we do not call Christ a creature, speaking absolutely, because the hypostasis is connoted by the name of Christ. But we do say that the soul of Christ or the body of Christ is a creature."

entity, like your soul. So, the strategy of the Eternalist—noting that God's divine knowledge is not, strictly speaking, prior to any temporal willing—is inoperable here. The analogy does not hold; Christ's divine intellect might not be temporally prior to your reading this chapter, but his *created* intellect was. How might Aquinas answer this Second Problem of foreknowledge and freedom? More generally, how might anyone who extends Conciliar Christology to include the claim that Christ knew all things, past, present, and future, via his human intellect, answer this Second Problem of foreknowledge and freedom?

In this chapter, I will explain the Thomistic view of Christ's knowledge. In doing so, I will show that the view isn't idiosyncratic to Aquinas. I will then provide an answer to the Second Problem of divine foreknowledge and creaturely freedom, drawing from Aquinas's thought on the relation between truth and reality. This Thomistic response has much in common with some recent work by Trenton Merricks (2009), Michael Rota (2010), and Kevin Timpe (2007).[6] Finally, I will answer some objections to the response I present.

II. THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST

Consider the scope of Christ's knowledge, both what he knows via his human intellect and what he knows via his divine intellect. Call the knowledge which the person of Christ had in virtue of his divine intellect his "divine knowledge," and call the knowledge which the person of Christ had in virtue of his human intellect his "human knowledge."

The scope of Christ's divine knowledge just is the scope of the knowledge of God. And since God is omniscient, it follows that Christ, too, via his divine knowledge, is omniscient. For anything there is to be known, Christ knows it via his divine knowledge.[7]

The scope of the human knowledge of Christ is a more contentious topic. Nearly everyone believes that there is something or other of which Christ's human intellect was nescient.[8] For instance, Aquinas thought that Christ did

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[6] Storrs McCall's article (2011) also makes points similar to the points I make in this chapter. McCall claims his solution to the foreknowledge and freedom problem to be new and "previously unnoticed." This is false. The three works I cite in the sentence for which this is a footnote make use of this solution (or one very similar to it), and McCall himself cites Molina as making use of it.

[7] This claim, all by itself, is consistent with the divine intellect not knowing some "things," for instance, the future free actions of creatures, or counterfactuals of creaturely freedom, provided that such "things" aren't there to be known.

[8] Some authors distinguish between being nescient and being ignorant. On their usage of the terms, to be nescient of something is merely not to know it; to be ignorant of something is not to

not know, via his human intellect, the full scope of the divine power.[9] That said, there is also a consensus, at least according to Aquinas, that Christ's human knowledge includes knowledge of all future occurrences. This section begins with the thought of Aquinas but goes on to consider those same topics in other thinkers and ecclesial bodies.

II.a. Aquinas on the Knowledge of Christ

According to Aquinas, Christ had four different types of knowledge.[10] The first sort of knowledge is the knowledge that the person of Christ had through the divine intellect. The remaining three types of knowledge that Aquinas attributes to the Incarnate Word are all had through the created intellect. They are: the knowledge had by the blessed in heaven, infused knowledge, and knowledge acquired by natural human means, as you or I acquire knowledge.[11] Aquinas provides this fourfold division in knowledge, in part, to answer difficulties raised by scriptural passages, to ensure that Christ is not only the source of all grace, but also the most graced individual, and to ensure that each part of the human nature of Christ performed the operation appropriate to it.[12] In what follows, I will briefly describe these three sorts of knowledge that Christ had through the activity of his created intellect, since understanding them is vital to understanding this Second Problem of foreknowledge and freedom.

II.a.1. Acquired Knowledge

The first and most mundane sort of knowledge that Christ had through his human soul is acquired knowledge. Christ acquired knowledge in the same ways that you or I acquire knowledge. If Christ did not acquire knowledge in these ways, part of his natural operation would be lacking, and Aquinas (*ST* III q.12 a.2 resp.) finds that odious. For instance, one way that Christ knew that there was a man born blind in front of him was by seeing the man, and not merely by the knowledge of his divine intellect, or by the knowledge infused into his soul at the first moment of his existence. The Gospel story does not tell of *two* men born without the ability to learn through seeing—the healed *and* the healer. Acquired knowledge poses no foreknowledge and freedom problem. As Aquinas explicitly says: "by this [acquired] knowledge

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know it *when one should know it*. I thank a reader for bringing this distinction to my attention. To see more on this division, see, for instance, Lonergan (2016, 677).

⁹ See *ST* III q.11 a.1 resp.   ¹⁰ See *ST* III q.9, *QDV* q.20, and *Comp. Theol.* 216.
¹¹ To see him discuss these issues, see *ST* III q.9.   ¹² *ST* III q.9.

He did not know the essences of separate substances, nor past, present, or future singulars."[13]

II.a.2. Beatific Knowledge

A second sort of knowledge, and one that seems more relevant to the problem of foreknowledge and creaturely freedom, is the knowledge which the soul of Christ had in virtue of the beatific vision. Aquinas argued that, from the moment of conception, Christ experienced the beatific vision, along with the knowledge that comes with it.[14] The scope of this knowledge is remarkable. Aquinas writes that by it "the soul of Christ knows all things that God knows in Himself by the knowledge of vision, but not all that God knows in Himself by knowledge of simple intelligence."[15] That is, Aquinas thinks that Christ, by means of the knowledge had in his created soul in virtue of the beatific vision, knows all that there is to know about creation. As Aquinas writes in the same article:

> When it is *inquired* whether Christ knows all things in the Word, *all things* can be taken in two ways: First, properly, to stand for all that in any way whatsoever is, will be, or was done, said, or thought, by whomsoever and at any time. And in this way it must be said that the soul of Christ knows all things in the Word.[16]

Via the beatific knowledge, Christ knew, according to Aquinas, everything that you would do or think at every moment of your life, and he knew it in his created intellect. Beatific knowledge, then, seems to have some ramifications for the discussion of foreknowledge and creaturely freedom.

Christ's knowledge by beatific vision is not a knowledge that Christ's human soul is granted at the end of time, after all human actions and thoughts. This is knowledge Christ has from conception, since, according to Aquinas, he shares in the beatific vision from conception.[17] As Aquinas says (*Comp. Theol.* 216), "Christ, the author of man's salvation, should rightly have possessed the

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[13] *ST* III q.12 a.1 ad.3. See also Gaine (2015a) for more on Christ's acquired knowledge in the thought of Aquinas.

[14] *ST* III q.9 a.2 Aquinas writes in his commentary on the Gospel of John, "About this we read, 'And Jesus increased in grace and wisdom' (Luke 2:52); not that he acquired a power and wisdom that he previously lacked, for in this respect he was perfect from the instant of his conception, but because his power and wisdom were becoming known to men: 'Indeed, you are a hidden God' (Is. 45:15)" (Aquinas 1980, 1:14, no. 264).

[15] *ST* III q.10 a.2 ad.2.

[16] *ST* III q.10 a.2 resp. See also: "He knows all individual things and every single act of all things, even the secret thoughts of men's hearts. This can be said of no other creature" (Aquinas 1954, q.20 a.4 resp.); "Accordingly, the soul of Christ sees all things, present, past, and future, in the Word; nevertheless, it does not see everything which God can make" (Aquinas 1954, q.20 a.4 ad.1).

[17] See, for instance, the above quotation from Aquinas's commentary on the Gospel of John, where he says that Christ's human soul had the perfection of wisdom "from the instant of his conception"; and *ST* III q.33 a.3.

full vision of God from the very beginning of His incarnation; propriety would not allow Him to have attained to it in the course of time, as other saints do." Thus, beatific knowledge has precisely the scope and temporal priority that is required for a problem of foreknowledge and freedom. Two thousand years ago, Christ knew exactly what you would be doing and thinking at every moment of your life. He knew it by his human intellect, which is a temporal entity, like your intellect. One might wonder, though, if beatific knowledge is an appropriate sort of knowledge to begin an argument from foreknowledge, due to its peculiar mode.

Concerning this mode of knowing, Aquinas says:

> Indeed, even as man, Christ has a twofold knowledge. The one is godlike, whereby He sees God in His essence, and other things in God, just as God Himself, by knowing Himself, knows all other things.   (1948, *Comp. Theol.* 216.)

Elsewhere Aquinas says (*ST* III q.9 a.3 ad.3.) that this beatific knowledge is "a similitude of the divine Essence, or of whatever is known in the divine Essence." And again, "vision of the divine Essence is granted to all the blessed by a partaking of the divine light which is shed upon them from the fountain of the Word of God" (*ST* III q.10 a.4 resp.). From these texts, one can gather that the beatific vision yields knowledge in some way by partaking of divine light, becoming assimilated or united to God, and seeing God in his essence in some way. The knowledge had from the beatific vision, then, is unlike our standard ways of knowing; it is a *sui generis* mode of knowing had through a sort of union with and participation in God.

Because of its peculiar mode, the objector might claim that we do not know enough about beatific knowledge to know whether it is the sort of knowing that can generate a foreknowledge and free will problem. It could be that a final analysis of this sort of knowledge would rule out the foreknowledge problem. Since this sort of knowledge, knowledge had by the blessed through union with God and seeing God for what God is, is so mysterious to us, building an argument on it would be subject to the same mystery.

I find this to be a weak objection. If the beatific knowledge were too mysterious to begin an argument from foreknowledge and freedom, then the divine knowledge, on which the beatific knowledge is based, should be too mysterious as well. In fact, the divine knowledge is even more mysterious than beatific knowledge. But then any problem of divine foreknowledge and human freedom would have an easy response from appeal to mystery, if this objection were apt. Nevertheless, to avoid this objection, I will leave this type of knowledge to one side when discussing the problem of foreknowledge and freedom.[18] I will note, though, that if one could run this argument from

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[18] By leaving beatific knowledge to one side, I can sidestep some of the argumentation about whether or not Christ had beatific knowledge during his time on earth. See Weinandy (2004;

beatific knowledge, then the knowledge of the blessed in heaven would raise the problem of foreknowledge and freedom, aside from consideration of the Incarnation.[19]

II.a.3. Infused Knowledge

This brings me to the final sort of knowledge, infused knowledge, of which Aquinas writes (*ST* III q.11 a.5 sed contra), "the knowledge of Christ we are now speaking about was univocal with our knowledge, even as His soul was of the same species as ours."[20] Aquinas's point with this analogy is that, just as Christ's human soul is literally of the same sort as our souls, so Christ's knowledge by infusion is the same sort of knowledge as the knowledge that we have. He gained it in a way unlike the means by which we gain our knowledge, but it is, nevertheless, the same sort of knowledge in both cases. For instance, both are equally suited for action and inference.[21]

A helpful analogy for understanding infused knowledge might be the following. Recall the movie *The Matrix* (1999), where the protagonists enter a virtual reality by hooking their brains into a computer program (the Matrix). While in the Matrix, they can call out to the "operators" who stay outside the program. These operators can upload knowledge into the minds of the people in the Matrix. In one scene, two protagonists, Neo and Trinity, are on top of a building. The following dialogue occurs after Neo gestures toward a helicopter:

> NEO: "Can you fly that thing?"
> TRINITY: Trinity:"Not yet . . ." [pulls out cell phone] "Tank, I need a pilot program for a B-212 Helicopter. Hurry!"
> [The operator Tank calls up the pilot program on the computer and hits the key to upload it into Trinity's mind; electronic zapping noises and fluttering eyelids ensue.]
> TRINITY: "Let's go!"
> [They fly away, Trinity piloting the helicopter perfectly.]

2014) and White (2005, 2016, chap. 5) for a discussion of the beatific vision of Christ during his earthly life.

[19] I thank Michael Gorman for this point about beatific knowledge of the blessed in heaven. The blessed in heaven share in this beatific vision, and so they, too, will have knowledge of all things past, present, and future. But do they have such knowledge before now? This is unclear. And so an argument from the foreknowledge of the blessed to our lack of freedom—or their own—has less force than an argument from the foreknowledge of Christ had through his human intellect. For more on the freedom of the redeemed in heaven, see Pawl and Timpe (2009, 2013).

[20] Again, I am referring to a *sed contra* here as evidence of what Aquinas thought, which is perilous. Happily, the block quotation a few paragraphs down from Aquinas concerning Pentecost makes the same needful points.

[21] See *ST* III q.11 a.2 to see Aquinas's discussion of infused knowledge not being derived from sensory stimulation; see a.3 for his discussion of it being collative.

Trinity gains the knowledge of how to fly the helicopter via the direct infusion from Tank. Her knowledge is not acquired by empirical observation, trial and error, reading a manual, etc. That said, her knowledge of how to fly the helicopter is no different in kind than the knowledge possessed by the helicopter's original pilot. Trinity and the pilot know the same things, but the knowledge was gained in different ways. Furthermore, Trinity's new knowledge is useful for inference, as when she sees from the damage caused by Agent Smith's bullets that the helicopter is not long for that (virtual) world.

In this analogy, the part of *the* Trinity is played by the operator, Tank, and the part of Christ's human soul is played by Trinity. As Tank "zaps" new knowledge about the world into Trinity, so *the* Trinity zaps new knowledge about the world into the human soul of Christ at his conception. In both cases, the recipient of the infusion knows what others know: Trinity knows how to fly the helicopter, as does the original pilot; Christ, through his human intellect, knows that you are reading this chapter, as do you. Trinity can employ this infused knowledge discursively to reason about how to fly the helicopter in the aftermath of severe damage, just as Christ can employ his infused knowledge discursively to reason about who pays taxes to kings (Matt. 17: 24–7).[22]

Aquinas thinks that the infusion of knowledge is not unique to the human soul of Christ. He claims that God does this on occasion with mere humans, as with the Apostles on Pentecost:

> God can produce the effects of second causes, without these second causes, as we have said in the First Part, Question 105, Article 6. Just as, therefore, sometimes, in order to show His power, He causes health, without its natural cause, but which nature could have caused, so also, at times, for the manifestation of His power, He infuses into man even those habits which can be caused by a natural power. Thus He gave to the apostles the knowledge of the Scriptures and of all languages, which men can acquire by study or by custom, but not so perfectly.
>
> (*ST* I-II q.51 a.4 resp. Translation adapted.)

Here Aquinas claims that God gave the knowledge of scripture and all languages to the Apostles. So, the Apostles knew how to conjugate the Latin verb *laudare*, just as the Romans did, though the Apostles did not gain this knowledge in the same way that the Romans did. And they could employ this knowledge to discern which terms were best to use to carry the proper shades of meaning for what they meant to say.

In summary, then, infused knowledge is univocally the same as our run-of-the-mill knowledge, but it is acquired in a miraculous way. As Lonergan writes:

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[22] Aquinas gives this scriptural passage as an example of Christ using his infused knowledge discursively. Christ performs a disjunctive syllogism with an exclusive "or."

> Infused knowledge and acquired knowledge are distinguished by their origin.
> Infused knowledge is produced immediately by God; acquired knowledge is pro-
> duced by God through the mediation of natural principles.   (Lonergan 2016, 709)

Rather than being acquired, as knowledge of scripture, languages, or
helicopter-piloting normally is, it is given directly as a gift from God. Such
knowledge, aside from its unique reception, is the same as our pedestrian
knowledge in every way. If my acquired knowledge is, ontologically speaking,
an accidental form, then the infused knowledge of Christ and the infused
knowledge of the apostles is an accidental form, too, indeed, an accidental
form of the same type. The difference is not the ontological story of *what it is*,
it is the efficient causal story of *how it got there*.

   At this point, it should be clear that if Aquinas claims that Christ's human
intellect received infused knowledge of everything that happens in the future,
then the Second Problem of foreknowledge and creaturely freedom rears its
head. It should be equally clear that the Eternity Solution to the Standard
Problem is useless for this Second Problem, since Christ's human soul is no
more atemporal than your soul. What, then, is the scope of the infused
knowledge of Christ?

   Recall the quotation at the end of the discussion of acquired knowledge in
Section II.a.1, in which Aquinas explicitly says that through acquired know-
ledge Christ does not know future singulars. Here is the quotation again, along
with the text immediately following it:

> Hence by this [acquired] knowledge He did not know the essences of separate
> substances, nor past, present, or future singulars, *which, nevertheless, he knew by
> infused knowledge*, as was said above.   (*ST* III q.12 a.1 ad.3.)

Aquinas claims that Christ's human soul, through infused knowledge, knows
all singular things, past, present and future. In the earlier text to which
Aquinas points, he says that by that infused knowledge

> the soul of Christ knew: First, whatever can be known by force of a man's active
> intellect, e.g. whatever pertains to human sciences; secondly, by this knowledge
> Christ knew all things made known to man by divine revelation, whether they
> belong to the gift of wisdom or the gift of prophecy, or any other gift of the Holy
> Spirit; since the soul of Christ knew these things more fully and completely than
> others.   (*ST* III q.11 a.1 resp.)

Aquinas elaborates in a reply to an objection in the same article, claiming that
Christ "knew all singular truths—present, past, and future."[23]

   It seems to me that this knowledge does raise the difficulty of foreknowledge
and creaturely freedom. For it is knowledge of all things that will occur prior to
their occurrence. Furthermore, unlike the knowledge that Christ's soul had

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[23] *ST* III q.11 a.1 ad.3. See also *QDV* q.20 aa.2, 3.

through the beatific vision, this knowledge is the same in kind as our knowledge. As such, there is, at least for Aquinas, a difficulty in explaining how this foreknowledge does not impinge upon human freedom. The Eternity Solution is silent on this issue.

II.b. Others on Christ's Human Knowledge

As I cited in Section I, Aquinas claimed (*QDV* q.8 a.4 resp.) that all held that the soul of Christ knew all that God knows with his knowledge of vision. On this view, which Aquinas says is universally affirmed,[24] Christ knew,[25] via both his divine and his human knowledge, all that would happen in the future. De Aldama and Solano likewise say, "With by far the more common opinion of theologians it must be said that Christ knew by his per se infused knowledge *the thoughts of hearts and future contingent events*" (de Aldama and Solano 2014, 142, emphasis in the original).

 Bartel writes of the formers and shapers of Conciliar Christology and their view with respect to what Christ knew. He writes:

> Cyril, along with many of his contemporaries, believed that Christ's human soul was not subject to ignorance: the Scriptural texts which suggest otherwise only mean that Christ pretended to be ignorant in order to accomplish the purposes of his incarnation. Indeed, long after Chalcedon, impeccably authoritative Christian teachers denied Christ's ignorance and growth in knowledge, and denied that Christ ever suffered protracted moral conflict. Therefore, we may safely conclude that the Chalcedonian Fathers did not intend to assert that Christ's human rational soul was ever ignorant, or that it ever chose to obey the Father after struggling with temptation, or, for that matter, that it ever had a capacity for either. We may even conclude that they would not have agreed to assert either of these claims if the issue had been put to a vote of the council: some of them would certainly have rejected at least one of the claims.   (Bartel 1991, 35)

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[24] To see some discussion of this universal consensus, see John Murray (1963). For other helpful discussion of the knowledge of Jesus, see Joel Archer (2017), Gaine (2015b, chap. 6), Margerie (1980), Raymond Moloney (2000), Randall Rosenberg (2010), Therese Scarpelli (2007), Speer (1993), and Wellum (2016, 454–9).

[25] Aquinas uses the present tense in the above quotation, but I use the past tense here. That might lead one to think that Aquinas only really means that Christ now knows the future, and that he did not mean to claim that Christ knew the future during his earthly ministry. Aquinas, however, affirms that Christ, during his earthly ministry, had knowledge of all things past, present, and future. For instance, we have seen Aquinas say that Christ knew all things, past, present, and future via his infused knowledge (*ST* III q.12 a.1 ad.3). Also on this point, Aquinas claimed that Christ knew the future by means of the beatific knowledge he had in virtue of the beatific vision, and that this knowledge was received at his first moment of conception (*ST* III q.33 a.3).

Among the "contemporaries or near-contemporaries of Cyril who shared his opinion" he includes Athanasius, Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil, and Augustine (Bartel 1991, note 39). Moreover, Pannenberg writes:

> During the Christological controversies, apparently only the Antiochene theologians accepted a genuine ignorance of Jesus' part. Later such an "agnoetic" theory became suspect on the grounds that it was Nestorian.   (Pannenberg 1968, 333)

St Gregory the Great, too, affirmed Christ's knowledge of the future in a letter to Eulogius, Patriarch of Alexandria, in the year 600.[26] St Gregory was discussing Christ's knowledge of the coming Final Judgment, but his argument is that Christ, as creator of all, is knower of all. And since knower of all, knower of the Final Judgment. This form of argument, if viable, would also show that Christ knows all other future states as well. Gregory goes so far as to call the opposing view foolish, asking who can be so stupid as to hold it. Moloney (2000, 46) shows convincingly that St Maximus the Confessor, too, thought that the Word, in his human intellect, lacked ignorance.[27]

Even today, professors at Catholic seminaries are forbidden from teaching that Christ didn't know all future states by his human intellect. We see this in "Certain Propositions on the Knowledge of the Soul of Christ," a decree from the Holy Office (now called the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith) later confirmed by Pope Benedict XV, in which the Holy Office answers in the negative to both the following questions:

> Can it be safely taught at seminaries that it is not the case that "the opinion [can] be called certain which has established that the soul of Christ was ignorant of nothing, but from the beginning knew all things in the Word, past, present, and future, or all things that God knows by the knowledge of vision?'
>
> Can it be safely taught at seminaries that 'the opinion of certain more recent persons on the limited knowledge of the soul of Christ is to be accepted in Catholic schools no less than the notion of the ancients on universal knowledge?'
> (Denzinger 2002, 2184–5)

Put otherwise, the Holy Office taught, and the then-Pope confirmed, that seminaries cannot teach that it is not certain whether Christ knew all things, past, present, and future in his human intellect. On a related note, Pope Pius the XII, in his encyclical letter *Mystici Corporis* (Denzinger 2002, 2289), taught that Christ's human intellect was aware of all the members of his mystical body from the beginning of his incarnation.

Such a high view of Christ's human knowledge is shared among some protestants as well. The Lutheran confessions include the claim that Christ,

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[26] See Denzinger (2002, para. 248).
[27] For more on the patristic discussion of Christ's knowledge, see Moloney (1998); for medieval views, see Adams (1999).

as a man, knew all things. I provided the quotation in full in Chapter 6, Section IV.a. Here I will provide the most relevant part:

> as man, He has received through this personal union all knowledge and all power in deed and truth. And thus all the treasures of wisdom are hidden in Him.
> (The Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord VIII, para. 74)

It seems that the Lutherans have an even higher view than the Catholics on the issue.

Furthermore, in addition to having exhaustive knowledge about the future states of the world, Christ's beliefs about the future were both certain and infallible. For, one present truth Christ would know via his human intellect when thinking about the future truths is that the source of these truths is God's direct revelation of them to him. He would know the source to be a truth teller with the impossibility of being mistaken, and such knowledge would breed psychological certainty for Christ.

At this point, I conclude that Aquinas thought, along with many others, and some ecclesial bodies, that Christ knew, in virtue of his human intellect, the future. We can define the view in question as follows:

The Foreknowledge Thesis: Christ, in virtue of his created human intellect, had certain, infallible, exhaustive foreknowledge.

There is debate whether such knowledge had to be occurrent. Perhaps he had this knowledge dispositionally. The distinction in use here is, broadly, that occurrent knowledge is ready at hand, in front of one's mind's eye, whereas dispositional knowledge is knowledge not had occurrently, but able to be "pulled up," so to speak, if needed. Aquinas thought the infused knowledge that Jesus had was habitual, not necessarily occurrent (see *ST* III q.11 a.5, especially ad.1). In addition, I read Rahner as meaning that Christ had dispositional and not occurrent knowledge when he writes (Rahner 1966, 213) of Christ's human soul that "direct presence to the Logos includes implicit knowledge of everything connected with the mission and soteriological task of Our Lord." Likewise, Sturch writes of Scotus's view

> that Christ's soul could not indeed receive all truths at the same time, but could know any item singly, and thus could be aware of any fact He turned His attention to throughout an infinite range of truths.   (Sturch 1991, 27)[28]

One finds the same taught by Lonergan (2016, 711), who writes, citing Aquinas, that "[i]nfused knowledge designates a habit, not elicited acts." To my mind, the views of Aquinas, Rahner, and Scotus on this point are more plausible than the alternative—that, at every moment of his earthly existence, Christ was actively thinking by means of his human intellect about everything

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[28] Sturch cites Scotus' *Opus Oxoniense (Ordinatio)*, I. 3, dist. 14, q. 2, n. 20.

that had ever happened anywhere, was happening everywhere then, and would happen anywhere, forevermore. That seems like too much, too distracting, and too irrelevant to his daily activities. I doubt he ever had reason to think of the number of potato chips I have bought up to this point in my life (no mere human knows, and none would ever need to), but to believe that he was *always* thinking of me and my potato chips—while preaching, while driving moneychangers out of the temple, while turning water to wine, while praying to the Father, etc.—that seems wholly unnecessary.[29]

   No doubt this view raises some scriptural worries in the minds of some readers. In the next Section I will discuss how the proponents of the Foreknowledge Thesis addressed those potential objections. I don't intend to get into biblical exegesis, or to put myself in a position to decide whether the interpretations of such passages by the proponents of the Foreknowledge Thesis provide, all things considered, viable response to these worries. As I said in the Introduction, such work is not needful for my project. For I don't intend to show that this extension, or any extension in this book, is *true*; I merely intend to show that it is a common view in Christological reflection. Then, after justifying its consideration by noting its commonality, I discuss whether philosophical objections show it to be incompatible with Conciliar Christology. In the next section, I intend to show that the proponents of the Foreknowledge Thesis affirmed their view, even in light of the scriptural difficulties with it.

II.c. Scriptural Worries about the Foreknowledge Thesis

It is clear that Aquinas and many others in the tradition thought that Christ knew all things, past, present, and future, by means of his human intellect, and that he received such knowledge via infusion. I noted at the beginning of this book that I would not be answering objections from scripture to the Extended Conciliar Christology that I discuss. That remains true even here. I will not be answering the scriptural objections. Rather, I will be reporting how the thinkers in question answered them. Doing so highlights that these objections weren't unknown to the proponents of the Foreknowledge Thesis. In general, these philosophers—and Aquinas, in particular—cared deeply about their theology being scripturally informed.

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[29] A separate question about the infused knowledge of Christ is whether he could deliberate by means of it. Here de Aldama and Solano (2014, 143) write, "Theologians generally hold against Durandus that Christ in the exercise of this [per se infused] knowledge *did not need* discourse. However it is hotly disputed whether Christ in the exercise of his infused knowledge *was able* to make use of discourse" (emphasis in the original). This goes to show, as much as anything can, that humans can hotly dispute *anything*.

In scripture, we find texts that seem to imply ignorance in Christ. Seeing how Aquinas deals with those texts will make his strong commitment to Christ's infused knowledge of all things past, present, and future abundantly clear. The two biblical passages most often discussed in connection with the extent of Christ's knowledge are Luke 2:52 and Mark 13:32:[30]

> Luke 2:52: And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man.
> Mark 13:32: [Jesus said,] "But of that day or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."

With respect to the first, how could Jesus have grown in wisdom, as Luke's Gospel says, if, from the moment of his conception, he knew all things, past, present, and future? Where is there room for growth in such knowledge? And with respect to the second, if the Son does not know the day or hour, then he does not have exhaustive foreknowledge of future events, as Aquinas claims he does. I will consider Aquinas's response to these passages in turn.

Rather than see the Lucan passage as a difficulty for his position, Aquinas employs this passage as evidence for the acquired knowledge of Christ's human intellect.[31] Since Christ grew in knowledge, there must be some sort of knowledge he has that can grow. Neither the divine, nor the infused, nor the beatific knowledge can grow, so it must be another, fourth, sort of knowledge that grows. Furthermore, it is fitting that Christ have this sort of knowledge, since man naturally has an operation which acquires knowledge from the sensible world, and it would be appropriate for Christ to employ this operation. So rather than seeing this passage as a hindrance, Aquinas sees it as a boon. Elsewhere, Aquinas (1980, chap. 1, Lecture 14) writes in his commentary on the Gospel of John:

> About this we read, "And Jesus increased in grace and wisdom" (Luke 2:52); not that he acquired a power and wisdom that he previously lacked, for in this respect he was perfect from the instant of his conception, but because his power and wisdom were becoming known to men: "Indeed, you are a hidden God" (Is 45:15).

On Aquinas's view, then, Jesus grows in grace and wisdom insofar as he grew in renown for his wisdom and grace.

The passage from Mark requires finessing on Aquinas's part, though he follows well-worn roads in his answer to it. The problem is as follows. It seems that there is some knowledge that Christ lacked, and by his own admission. Such knowledge cannot be lacking in the divine mind, since the Son shares the

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[30] See also Archer (2017), Gaine (2015b, chap. 6) and Moloney (2000, 28–32) for additional discussion of these passages.

[31] For Aquinas's discussions of Luke 2:52, see: *QDV* q.20 a.1 sed contra; *Comp. Theol.* 216; *ST* III q.7 a.12 obj.3 and ad.3; *ST* III q.12 a.2 sed contra, resp., and ad.3; his Commentary on John 1:14, no. 264. For a critical discussion of Aquinas's approach, see Maritain (1969, 50–4).

divine mind with the Father. So, if the Father knows the last day, the Son (and Holy Spirit) must as well. The source of this ignorance, then, cannot be the divine intellect. So, the ignorance must arise from the human intellect. Thus, the human intellect lacks some knowledge. If Christ had infused knowledge of all things past, present, and future, then that intellect would not lack this knowledge about the future time of the second coming. But it does lack it, and hence Christ must not have such infused knowledge. Aquinas puts the problem as follows:

> In this connection, some have found an occasion for going astray in the added words, "nor the Son," which are read in Mark 13:32. They contend that the Son is inferior to the Father, on the score that He is ignorant of matters which the Father knows. The difficulty could be avoided by replying that the Son is ignorant of this event in His assumed human nature, but not in His divine nature, in which He has one and the same wisdom as the Father or, to speak with greater propriety, He is wisdom itself intellectually conceived.   (Aquinas 1948, *Comp. Theol.* 242.)

Here Aquinas provides one way to answer the objection which says the Son must be inferior to the Father since he knows less than the Father. The answer is to say that Christ only knows less in his assumed human nature. That nature, on this response, is not a nature by means of which the Son knows the second coming.

Aquinas is not content with this appeal to human ignorance, though. He continues:

> But the Son could hardly be unaware of the divine judgment even in His assumed nature, since His soul, as the Evangelist attests, is full of God's grace and truth [John 1:14], as was pointed out above. Nor does it seem reasonable that Christ, who has received the power to judge "because He is the Son of man" (John 5:27), should be ignorant in His human nature of the time appointed for Him to judge. The Father would not really have given all judgment to Him, if the judgment of determining the time of His coming were withheld from Him.
>
> (Aquinas 1948, *Comp. Theol.* 242)

Aquinas sees the above ignorance response as contrary to the scriptural witness. So, he proposes a different, by his time, standard, response to the problem:

> Accordingly this text is to be interpreted in the light of the usual style of speech found in the Scriptures, in which God is said to know a thing when He imparts knowledge of that thing, as when He said to Abraham, in Genesis 22:12: "Now I know that you fear God." The meaning is not that He who knows all things from eternity began to know at that moment, but that He made known Abraham's devotedness by that declaration. In a similar way the Son is said to be ignorant of the day of judgment, because He did not impart that knowledge to the disciples, but replied to them, Acts 1:7: "It is not for you to know the times or moments which the Father has put in His own power." But the Father is not ignorant in this

way, since in any case He gave knowledge of the matter to the Son through the eternal generation.   (Aquinas 1948, *Comp. Theol.* 242. Translation adapted)

On Aquinas's reading, when Christ says he does not know, he means he does not make it known. This is Augustine's reading, also given in his *De Trinitate*.[32] Aquinas also cites Chrysostom as believing that the human soul of Christ knew the time of the final judgment when the apostles asked him.[33] Pohle (1913, 266–70) provides a long and careful discussion of the various ways those who denied ignorance of Christ dealt with this passage. Whether or not one finds the reasoning concerning the verse convincing, it is clear that even in the face of these biblical passages Aquinas asserts that Christ knows future events in his human intellect.[34] What, then, should Aquinas say about the Second Problem of foreknowledge and creaturely freedom? Before going on to discuss a potential response to the problem, I will take a moment to formalize the argument.

III. THE ARGUMENT FORMALIZED

At the beginning of this chapter I outlined a way in which to understand the objection to our freedom, given Christ's knowledge. In this Section I present that argument in a deductively valid formulation. I then give some preliminary assessment of that argument.

1.	Assume that the Foreknowledge Thesis and Conciliar Christology are both true.	(For Conditional Proof.)
2.	2,000 years ago, Christ knew that at this moment you would be reading this chapter.	(From 1.)
3.	If 2, then it was true 2,000 years ago that at this moment you would be reading this chapter.	(Knowledge Implies Truth.)
4.	It was true 2,000 years ago that at this moment you would be reading this chapter.	(2, 3 Modus Ponens.)
5.	You have no control over how the world was 2,000 years ago.	(Assumption.)
6.	If 5 is true, then you have no ability to make it otherwise than that 4 is true.	(Assumption.)
7.	You have no ability to make it otherwise than that 4 is true.	(5, 6 Modus Ponens.)

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[32] *De Trinitate* I.12.23.
[33] For Aquinas's reference to Chrysostom, see *ST* III q.10 a.2 ad.1.
[34] For passages where Aquinas discusses Mark 13:32, see: *Comp. Theol.* 242; Aquinas, *De Trin.* 3.4 ad.6; *ST* III q.10 a.2 obj. 1 and ad.1.

8. Necessarily, if 7 is true, then you are reading this chapter now.   (Assumption.)

9. If S has no ability to make it otherwise than x, and, necessarily, x entails y, then S has no ability to make it otherwise than y.   (Assumption.)

10. You have no ability to make it otherwise than that you are reading this chapter now.   (From 7–9.)

11. *Generalization*: This inability to do otherwise isn't specific to your reading this chapter, it permeates your whole life—and mine as well.

12. If S is free, then S has the ability, at least once, to do otherwise than S does.   (Assumption.)

13. You—and I—are not free.   (10, 11, 12 Modus Tollens-ish.)

14. If the Foreknowledge Thesis and Conciliar Christology are both true, then you—and I—are not free.   (Conditional Proof, 1–13.)

Were this argument put in terms of the standard problem of free will and foreknowledge, then both the atemporalist and the Open Theist could deny the truth of Premise 2. The Open Theist could deny it on the grounds that, while God was knowing things way back then, he wasn't knowing *this particular truth* way back then. The atemporalist, on the other hand, would claim that God atemporally knows that truth, but it is false that *way back then* God knew it. Put in terms of Christ's knowledge, however, both of these solutions fail. For, assuming the truth of Premise 1, Premise 2 follows. And one subpar means of responding to a conditional proof is to deny the condition with which it begins.

This argument rests on multiple assumptions throughout. However, many of these assumptions are quite plausible. For instance, the assumption that knowledge implies truth is an (almost?) universally accepted claim. Others are quite contentious. Premise 12, for instance, might well be rejected by compatibilists (i.e., those who claim that free will is consistent with determinism). That said, while I won't argue for it, I find 12 quite plausible. And, in fact, as I said in Chapter 5, Section III, I am assuming the truth of incompatibilism in this book as a means of helping my opponent fortify his arguments. I note, though, that denying 12 is one means by which some thinkers in these debates can respond to this argument. In Section IV, I provide a Thomistic response to this argument.

IV. THE RELATION BETWEEN TRUTH AND BEING

I find no text where Aquinas takes up the question of whether Christ's infused knowledge renders humans unfree. Surely Aquinas did not think that it did,

though, since he thought that Christ, back then, knew what all humans do at all times, and yet he also thought that humans are free.[35] How might he reconcile Christ's foreknowledge with our freedom? In the remainder of this chapter, I will spell out one potential way, a way that makes use of Aquinas's understanding of the relationship between truth and being.

Recall that Christ's infused knowledge is like our knowledge in kind, differing only in source. So what Aquinas says concerning the nature of truth, in particular, the truth of human thoughts, should also hold for the truth of Christ's infused knowledge. In what follows I will show that, according to Aquinas, the truth of our thoughts depends on how reality is, and not the contrary. For instance, it is true *that you are reading now* because you are reading now, and not vice versa. Truth depends on being; being does not depend on truth.[36] How the world is explains the truth of our beliefs; the truth of our beliefs does not explain how the world is.[37] So, it is not the case that some future event happens *because* Christ knows it will in his created intellect. Rather, the contrary is true: Christ knows it will happen *because* it happens.

Aquinas states, in multiple places, in no unclear terms, that "Truth is defined as a conformity between the intellect and the thing" (*ST* I q.16 a.2 resp.). This conformity is not mere coincidence. Rather, the thought is true precisely because it gets things (or reality in general) right. As Aquinas writes, "The truth of our thought or words is caused by the existence of things" (Aquinas 1932, *Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia Dei* q.1 a.17, ad.29); and, in his Commentary on the Metaphysics:

> You are not white because we think truly that you are white; but conversely we think you are white because you are white. Hence it has been shown that the way in which a thing is disposed is the cause of truth both in thought and in speech.
> (Aquinas 1995, l.9 c.11 para. 1897)

For one final example, he writes:

> Truth which is in the soul but caused by things does not depend on what one thinks but on the existence of things. For from the fact that a thing is or is not, a statement or an intellect is said to be true or false.   (1954, q.1 a.2 ad.3)

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[35] I have already provided evidence for the first conjunct; for evidence of the latter conjunct, see Aquinas's response in *QDM* (*Quaestiones Disputatae de Malo*) q.6, where he claims that a denial of human freedom is both heretical and destroys the possibility of ethics.

[36] This is the truism with which Merricks (2009) begins his article; Aquinas would agree with him.

[37] Strictly speaking, the truth of some of our beliefs can explain how the world is. For instance, one way the world is is that it contains at least two true beliefs. The truth of our beliefs can explain why it is that the world is such that it contains at least two true beliefs. However, in most cases that we consider, such as the truth that there are dogs, or that you are reading this chapter now, the proposition is not what makes that truth to be true.

So, for Aquinas, the acquired thoughts of a human intellect are true because of how the world is, not vice versa. As he says explicitly, our true thoughts about things do not make things so; things being so make our thoughts true.[38] This has a clear application to Christ's foreknowledge.

Since Christ's thoughts are the same in kind as our thoughts, the same should be true of what he knows through his infused knowledge. It is not that he knows them to be that way, and hence they are that way. Rather, it is precisely because reality is the way it is that Christ's infused knowledge is what it is. You do not read this chapter because Christ knows you read it. Rather, in reality, you read it, and as a consequence of your reading it, the proposition *that you read the chapter at t* is true. What Christ knows—the earlier truth that *you will read this chapter at t*—is true because you read at the later time, *t*. So, because you do what you do, Christ knows what he knows.

The argument from Christ's human knowledge to a preclusion of free will gets the *because of* backwards. In the terms of the Standard Argument I presented at the beginning of this chapter, the faulty premise is the claim that you have no power over how the past was. You do have power over the past, in the following sense: it is because you read now that Christ's past belief was true. With specific reference to the argument given in Section III, Aquinas could deny Premise 5, saying that you do have control over the past, at least insofar as you can do something now—continue reading—and because you do that, Christ's belief was true. In Section V I will consider objections to this solution to the problem discussed in this chapter.

V. OBJECTIONS

In this Section I will consider five objections: one from Lady Philosophy in Boethius's *The Consolation of Philosophy*; two from purported disanalogies that threaten to render inapplicable the application of Aquinas's views on truth and reality to Christ's infused knowledge; a fourth objection from Aquinas's silence with respect to the purported solution; and a final objection that questions whether I've made responding to the problem too easy on myself.[39]

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[38] For more on Aquinas's views on the relationship between truth and reality, see Frost (2010) and Pawl (2008, 2016a). This section draws on both Pawl (2008, sect. 3.1) and Pawl (2016a). For more on scholastic views of truthmaker more broadly, see Embry (2014, 2015). For more work on the relationship between truthmaker theory and traditional Christian theism, see Pawl (2012a, 2017b).

[39] One family of objections that I will not discuss in depth is that the solution I offer in this chapter is a familiar one, known as "Ockham's Way Out," and as such is subject to the various objections that view faces. See Plantinga (1986) for the standard discussion of Ockham's Way

V.a. Lady Philosophy's Objection

One objection comes from Boethius.[40] Lady Philosophy presents and attacks a proposal similar to the one I offer. She presents it as follows:

> I cannot agree with the argument by which some people believe that they can solve this problem [the Standard Problem]. They say that things do not happen because Providence foresees that they will happen, but, on the contrary, that Providence foresees what is to come because it will happen, and in this way they find the necessity to be in things, not in Providence.   (Boethius 1962, 105)

By "necessity in things," I take Lady Philosophy to mean that the order of necessitation goes from the way things are to Providence, and not the contrary. She then goes on to argue against this answer:

> For, they say, it is not necessary that things should happen because they are foreseen, but only that things which will happen be foreseen—as though the problem were whether divine Providence is the cause of the necessity of future events, or the necessity of future events is the cause of divine Providence. But our concern is to prove that the fulfillment of things which God has foreseen is necessary, whatever the order of causes, even if the divine foreknowledge does not seem to make the occurrence of future events necessary.   (Boethius 1962, 105)

Here, and above, there is some unclear movement between causal and modal notions. That said, I read Lady Philosophy to be claiming that the real problem is not which direction the "because of" goes, whether God (or Christ's human intellect, in our case) knows because of what I do, or I do what I do because of what he knows. Leaving all causal talk to one side, we can ask, does the prior knowledge *entail* that I do what I do? The question should be about necessitation or entailment, not causation, she claims. She goes on with an analogy:

> For example, if a man sits down, the opinion that he is sitting must be true; and conversely, if the opinion that someone is sitting be true, then that person must necessarily be sitting. Therefore, there is necessity in both cases: that man must be sitting and the opinion must be true. But the man is not sitting because the opinion is true; the opinion is true because the sitting came before the opinion about it. Therefore, even though the cause of truth came from one side, necessity is common to both.   (Boethius 1962, 105)

I take her point to be the following. Both of these claims are true: Necessarily, if the man is sitting, then it is true *that the man is sitting*; necessarily, if it is true

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Out. To my mind, Trenton Merricks (2009, 46–50) has successfully put this line of objection to rest.

[40] Trenton Merricks (2009, 32) cites Jonathan Edwards as giving a version of this objection. Nelson Pike (1965, esp. 38–40, 1993, esp. 141) also discusses versions of this objection in multiple places.

that the man is sitting, then the man is sitting. Put otherwise, this necessitated biconditional is true: necessarily, the man is sitting if and only if it is true *that the man is sitting*. And if this necessitated biconditional is true, then why does it matter which way the "because of" relation runs between Christ's knowledge and your reading this chapter? His knowledge entails that you are reading. Aquinas affirms that Christ had such knowledge. Thus, 2,000 years ago something entailed your reading now, and that something is outside of your control. What else could be needed to secure your inability to do otherwise? How can a proponent of the view I put forward respond?

In reply, I agree that the entailment goes both ways between Christ's knowledge that you are reading and your now reading, even if the "because of" relation does not. It is also correct, supposing the Foreknowledge Thesis, that Christ, in his human intellect, knew 2,000 years ago that you would be reading now. But those two things do not together entail that you are unfree in reading now. What is required in addition, and precisely what is denied in the answer I offer in this chapter, is the claim that you have no control over whether or not Christ knows it. You do have control, given that it is precisely because you do what you do that he knows what he knows.

The argument should go like this: Necessarily, if Christ knew 2,000 years ago that you would be reading at this time, then it is true that you are reading at this time. And you have no control over what Christ knew or did not know 2,000 years ago. Now, if it is necessary that if P, then Q, and you have no control over P, then you have no control over Q.[41] And so you have no control over the fact that you are reading at this time.[42] The proponent of the theory I offer rejects the second premise, that you have no control over what Christ knew. You do have control, insofar as you have control of what that knowledge depends on.[43]

Suppose we modified the argument's second premise, so that it did not say that you had no control over what Christ knew, but merely said Christ knew 2,000 years ago that you would be reading at this time. From that (and the necessitated biconditional in the first premise) it follows that you are reading at this time, but it does not follow that your reading now is outside of your control. Your reading now *is* under your control. Furthermore, because your reading now is under your control, the truth-value of the proposition in the past is also under your control.

Thus, Lady Philosophy's objection, while apt for some views, is not apt against the view I offer here. I agree with Lady Philosophy that the problem is one of entailment, and not one of causation. Nevertheless, the explanatory

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[41] Finch and Warfield (1998, 521) call this conditional Beta 2.
[42] Cf. Merricks's (2009, 33) Main Argument.
[43] Aquinas, on my reading, would affirm Merricks's second corollary (2009, 42): "for all S and all p, if S has a choice about what p's truth depends on, then S has a choice about p's truth."

relation between what you do now and what was true in the past is relevant to the argument. It is relevant because the past truth depends upon your present acting, and you have control over your present acting, so you have control over the truth-value of the past thought which is supposed to cause all the problems.

V.b. A Disanalogy between Mere Human Intellectual States and Christ's Intellectual States

Consider a second objection. One might think that Aquinas's views on the asymmetrical dependence of truth on reality are not intended to apply to Christ's infused knowledge. Perhaps he only had mere humans in mind when discussing truth.

   I reply that Aquinas's claim that Christ's infused knowledge is like our knowledge in kind, just as Christ's soul is like our soul, should give us reassurance that we are not misapplying Aquinas's view of truth and reality, any more than we would be misapplying Aquinas's philosophical anthropology by applying what Aquinas says about human souls to Christ's soul. In addition, though, we should not get side-tracked. My main goal, as I pointed out in the Introduction (Section II.g) is not to be a faithful expositor and follower of Aquinas (though I certainly do not intend *not* to be a faithful expositor and follower).[44] My goal is to rebut objections to the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the Foreknowledge Thesis. One way to do that is through applying Aquinas's views of the relationship between truth and reality to Christ's human knowledge. Even if, contrary to fact in my view, Aquinas *did not* intend to apply his thoughts on truth and reality to Christ's soul, that matters little to whether we can so apply them in answering objections. This same point about the importance of following Aquinas can be said in response to the next two objections as well.

V.c. A Disanalogy between Future and Non-Future Truths

A third objection might go as follows. One might think that even if Aquinas's views on the asymmetrical dependence of truth on reality do apply to Christ's infused knowledge, they do not apply to knowledge *of the future*. Perhaps Aquinas never meant his views on truth and reality to apply to future truths.

   I reply that Aquinas explicitly applies this account of the relationship between truth and reality to our knowledge of future truths. He writes:

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[44] I tried not to write that parenthetical, dear reader, I really did. But I couldn't. The ambiguity would have kept me up at night.

> In this commensuration or conformity of intellect and thing it is not necessary that each of the two actually exist. Our intellect can be in conformity with things that, although not existing now, will exist in the future. Otherwise, it would not be true to say that 'the Antichrist will be born.'   (Aquinas 1954, q.1 a.5 resp.)

Here Aquinas claims that the conformity of thought to thing can be had, even without a thing there to which the thought is conformed![45] The intellect is conformed to that (non-existing) thing. But the "because of" claims still work the same way. It is because the Antichrist will be born that my thought "the Antichrist will be born" is true, and not vice versa. Likewise with Christ's knowledge that you are reading this chapter. His intellect was in conformity with this reality, even though this reality did not yet exist at that time, 2,000 years ago.

V.d. Why Aquinas's Silence Concerning This Reply?

Fourth, one might wonder why Aquinas did not make use of this reply in any of his writings on foreknowledge and freedom. We might think that he would have made use of it, were he favorable toward it. Given his lack of use, then, one might think that he was not, in fact, favorable to this solution.

First some background, then two responses to the fourth objection. Aquinas thought that the future can be known in two ways: either in its causes, or in itself.[46] Future things are known in their causes when the causes are present, and they determine a particular future thing. Free actions are not determined by prior causes, and so free actions are not the sort of things that can be known in their causes. So, the only way to foreknow a free action is by knowing the future as it is in itself. Only God, according to Aquinas, can have such knowledge. So, the only place where Aquinas has to worry about foreknowledge and freedom is when considering the divine. In fact, he cites Isaiah 41:23 ("foretell the things that shall come afterward, that we may know that you are gods!") in multiple texts as evidence for the claim that only the divine can

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[45] This point depends on one's theory of time. For, it could be that the future Antichrist exists, but just does not exist now. In such a case, there would be something for the intellect to be conformed to. However, in the same article, in the reply to objection 5, Aquinas says, "Since the future as such is not, and the past as such is not, the same reasoning holds for the truth of the past and future as for the truth of non-being." About non-being he says, in the reply to objection 2: "But non-being, considered outside the soul, has nothing by which it can be proportioned to the divine intellect or cause itself to be known in our intellects. Hence, if non-being is in conformity with any intellect, it is not because of itself but because of the intellect which forms within itself the notion of non-being." I take him to mean that future things do not exist, and that when the intellect is in conformity with future things, as it is in the Antichrist case, the conformity does not require the existence of the thing to which it is conformed.

[46] See, for instance: *ST* I q.86 a.4 resp.; *QDV* q.8 a.12 resp.; *QDM* q.16 a.7 resp.

know the future as it is in itself.[47] With this background information, I see two reasons why Aquinas may not have given the solution I propose.

The first response: So far as I know, Aquinas only considered the Standard Problem of foreknowledge and freedom, and, concerning that problem, he already had an answer that worked, was in the tradition, and was entailed by his theology—the Eternity Solution. Aquinas believed that divine simplicity entails divine eternity,[48] and he affirmed simplicity, so a solution to the foreknowledge and creaturely freedom problem fell into his lap. One might think he never mentioned the response I give here to the foreknowledge and creaturely freedom problem because he never saw a need for it. He had a response that worked in the one case he discussed—divine knowledge—and that response was already entailed by his theology.

The second response: the response I give to the Second Problem of foreknowledge and creaturely freedom might not be a viable response to the Standard Problem. This is because it might be inconsistent with Aquinas's view of the relation between God's (divine) knowledge and the world. Aquinas says in many places that God's knowledge is the cause of how things are.[49] On one reading of these passages, the relation between the truth of our beliefs and reality is inverted when it comes to God's beliefs and reality. It is because God knows creation is a certain way that creation is that way.[50] In that case, Aquinas would not mention this proposed solution when discussing the Godhead's foreknowledge because it is (again, on one reading) inconsistent with his theology. And since the Standard Problem is the only problem of divine foreknowledge and human freedom he discusses, his not mentioning it there would give us reason to think he would not mention it anywhere.

I should note that if the second response were workable, we would have yet another way to deal with this Second Problem of divine foreknowledge and human freedom, call it the way from common cause. God's knowledge, on this view, causes you to read this chapter. God also works causally to infuse the knowledge into Christ's human intellect. And so, there is no asymmetrical dependence relation either way between Christ's knowledge and your acting. Rather, they are both common effects of the divine act. Rather than Christ's (human) knowledge depending on what you do

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[47] See, for instance, *QDV* q.8 a.12 sed contra; *ST* I q.57 a.3 sed contra; his commentary on *De Anima*, 18 obj. 4.; *QDM* q.16 a.7 resp.

[48] See *ST* I q.10 a.2 resp. There is a missing step in what I say here. Aquinas thought that simplicity entails immutability, and that immutability entails eternality. Entailment is transitive, though, and so it is also true that simplicity entails eternality.

[49] See, for instance, his discussions of this point at *QDV* q.2 a.14 and *ST* I q.14 a.8.

[50] I have doubts about this reading of Aquinas's texts. Nevertheless, it is a reading that one finds in the literature on this topic. See Stump's (2005, 118–22) critical discussion of this reading, with which I am sympathetic.

now, both Christ's knowledge and what you do depend upon the divine intellect's knowledge.[51]

I think that there are problems with this second way to deal with the Second Problem of divine foreknowledge and human freedom. For, if it were right, then, as stated above, there would be no asymmetric relation between the knowledge that Christ has through his human intellect and the way the world is. But if there is no such asymmetric relation, then his knowledge by infusion is not of the same ontological type as our own acquired knowledge. Thus, if this second way of dealing with the Second Problem were correct, then Aquinas's views of Christ's infused knowledge would be false. Now, one might think that Aquinas's views on the infused knowledge of Christ are false for independent reasons. But we should not provide an allegedly Thomistic solution to the Second Problem that has the untoward consequence of falsifying other things he says in relation to the problem.

V.e. What if We Focus on Belief, Rather than Knowledge?

One might think that I've made the problem too easy for myself. For I have focused the discussion on the *knowledge* of Jesus. It is true that I have control over what Jesus *knows* about the future, insofar as I have control over what is true in the future, and knowledge requires truth. But that's not where the conversation should focus. For Jesus not only knows; he also *believes* all and only the true things about the future. While it seems true that I can affect what he knew, how would I go about affecting what he believed way back then?[52] Aren't his states of belief fixed now, such that, no matter what I do, my actions can't change those fixed states? How could my actions now have any control over his previous brain states or mental properties?

Put otherwise: knowledge depends on truth, truth depends on reality, and I have control over the relevant reality in some cases. Yes, this is all true. But belief doesn't likewise depend on truth. What sort of control could I have over those past mental states, now that they are so far in the past, and nothing I can now do can affect those past states?

Instead of my 1–14, the argument should include the following steps, or steps like them:

15. No choice about: Jesus believed you would
    read this chapter 2,000 years ago.
16. Necessarily, if Jesus had that belief 2,000
    years ago, you read this chapter.
17. Therefore, no choice about: reading this chapter.

You may well have a choice about what ends up counting as knowledge, but how could you have a choice about what was believed 2,000 years ago?

In reply, I think the proponent of this extension has the means to deny Premise 15. To see how, begin with an analogy of prayer for the past to a timeless God. Suppose I pray at noon that Bob didn't die at 9am when the plane went down. God hears the prayer eternally, then does something in time to affect what is past to me, but eternally present to him. There's no "backwards" causation here, since my prayer to God's receiving it isn't temporally ordered at all; and likewise, God's receiving the prayer to his saving Bob in virtue of the prayer is not temporally ordered either. (God doesn't act to save temporally *after* he receives the prayer.) Bob's, say, encountering the driftwood at the earlier time depends, in some sense, on my later praying that he is saved.

Next, treat all of my free actions as prayers that begin "God, please let Jesus believe way back when that I'm doing this thing now." Let God's infusing the knowledge into the human mind of Jesus be the answering of prayers. I can affect which beliefs Jesus had because what beliefs he has depends on what God zaps in, and what God zaps in depends on actions under my control.

Set aside the analogy. How can I, now, make it such that Christ never believed something 2,000 years ago? The answer is: I could make it such that a certain belief never meets the conditions that God decided had to be met in order to zap a certain belief into Christ. One such condition is its being true. I'm the one in control of whether such beliefs are true, since I'm the one in control of my actions. God, based on whether a belief meets the conditions he set, puts the right beliefs in Christ. So, I have control—derivative, at a distance, but nevertheless control—over what Christ believes.

Now consider the case without assuming atemporality. Suppose a powerful scientist near the end of the human race has created a perfectly reliable machine. The machine, to borrow from the science fiction literature, has mastered a sort of entanglement that allows it to entangle past particles to future particles and affect the past particles from the future. (If you scoff at this example, pick your own preferred science fiction or theological example. The method of communication does not matter for my purposes.) The machine is then set to send back all the history (from the future scientist's perspective) of the human future (from the past's perspective). One guy in the past gets all

that knowledge zapped in, and he keeps most of it to himself. Does that guy and his knowledge, call him Juses, render me unable to do otherwise? I think not. For I have control over what's sent back, by controlling my actions. Juses believes what he believes because of what I do, and if I had acted otherwise, the mechanism whereby he believes what he does would have acted otherwise, making him believe differently. It looks to me not to matter whether the zapper is an atemporal God, or a deep future God.

The response to this objection, then, does not require an assumption of an atemporal God. It merely requires some mechanism whereby the beliefs Christ has in his human nature are dependent on my future actions. So long as there is some such mechanism, past beliefs could be under our future control, too. With respect to the argument 15–17, then, this response denies Premise 15.

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the place where the argument from Christ's infused knowledge to our lack of freedom goes awry is where it presupposes that if something were known prior to its occurrence, then because of that knowledge we could have no control over the action. This claim gets the "because of" relation backwards, in Aquinas's view. Rather, it is because the future event occurs that the previous belief is true (and hence able to be knowledge). Christ's knowledge that you are reading this chapter is true *because* you are reading it. That is the way the arrow of explanation goes, even if the arrow of entailment goes both ways. It is not that you read it *because* Christ knew you would. Christ knew you would because here you are, reading this chapter. Since you have control over whether or not you are now reading, you have control over whether or not Christ knew, 2,000 years ago, that you are now reading. In fact, you can have control over Christ's previous beliefs, too, in the manner spelled out in Section V.e. Aquinas's writings on truth and reality provide a means to answer the Second Problem of divine foreknowledge and creaturely freedom. The Foreknowledge Extension is not shown to be inconsistent with Conciliar Christology by means of this Second Problem of divine foreknowledge and human freedom.

8

Christ's Knowledge in Relation to his Will

I. INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 7 I asked whether the Foreknowledge Thesis—the thesis that Christ, in virtue of his created human intellect, had certain, infallible, exhaustive foreknowledge—entailed that our actions are unfree. There I provided multiple ways one could deny the entailment, giving special attention to a response that centered on Aquinas's views of the relation between truth and reality. In this chapter I focus, not on whether Christ's human knowledge renders us unfree, but rather, whether it renders *him* unfree.

As I've said at the beginning of Part 2 and in the Introduction, I will cumulatively assume the previously discussed extensions in later chapters. I do this, in part, because I want to show that Fully Extended Conciliar Christology, that is, Conciliar Christology conjoined to the five extensions I consider in this book, is not inconsistent. And to do that, one must consider the full conjunction, not merely piecemeal conjunctions. But also, were I not to assume previous extensions, there would be an easy way to answer the problem raised in this chapter. That easy way would simply be conceding that Christ is not free via his human will. In order for the argument of this chapter to be pressing, then, we must assume the previously discussed (in Chapter 5) Human Freedom Thesis:

> *The Human Freedom Thesis*: Christ, by virtue of his assumed human will, was free.

Given that assumption, the extent of his knowledge, and the implications of that knowledge on his freedom, is pressing. For consider the following unfriendly conditional:

> *An Unfriendly Conditional*: if the Foreknowledge Thesis is true, then the Human Freedom Thesis is false.

If that unfriendly conditional were true, then Fully Extended Conciliar Christology would be false. This is because Fully Extended Conciliar Christology includes both the Foreknowledge Thesis and the Human Freedom Thesis. But

if that conditional were true and the Foreknowledge Thesis were true, then the Human Freedom Thesis would be false, and with it, Fully Extended Conciliar Christology. On the other hand, were the unfriendly conditional true and the Foreknowledge Thesis false, we wouldn't be able to derive the falsity of the Human Freedom Thesis. But nevertheless, Fully Extended Conciliar Christology would still be false, owing to the falsity of one of its conjuncts: The Foreknowledge Thesis. So, either way, whether the Foreknowledge Thesis is true or whether it is false, if the unfriendly conditional were true, Fully Extended Conciliar Christology would be false. Thus, any argument which implies the truth of the unfriendly conditional must be rebutted, if one is to remain a proponent of Fully Extended Conciliar Christology. In this chapter, I consider two such arguments.

I will focus on two arguments, each of which concludes that, given the Foreknowledge Thesis (and some other assumptions I make clear), Christ himself could not have been free. I have already provided reasons why the proponent of Extended Conciliar Christology would be remiss to claim that Christ was not free (see Chapter 5, Section II). And I have already provided reasons why the proponent of Fully Extended Conciliar Christology would be remiss to claim that Christ did not have foreknowledge via his human intellect (see Chapter 7, Section II). In this chapter, I will not rehearse those reasons. Rather, I will assume that the conclusion that Christ was not free is something the Extended Conciliar Christologist would want to deny, and so I work to provide viable answers to these two problems—that is, answers viable from the perspective of the Conciliar Christologist. The two problems are *the Problem of Deliberation* and the *Problem of Explanatory Priority*. I consider them in that order below. I consider two arguments for the following thesis, which I will call *The Conditional*:

The Conditional:	If the Foreknowledge Thesis is true, then Christ's created human will was not free, or at least lacked one sort of freedom vital for human flourishing.

If any of the arguments are successful in proving the Conditional, then Fully Extended Conciliar Christology is false.

II. THE PROBLEM OF DELIBERATION

One objection that could be posed to the belief that Christ knew his own free future actions is that such knowledge precludes the ability to deliberate, and, since deliberation is a necessary condition for freedom, such knowledge precludes his freedom. For instance, Pannenberg writes, citing Karl Rahner approvingly:

> As awareness of the not yet decided future, the knowledge of one's own ignorance is a condition of human openness and freedom.   (Pannenberg 1968, 333)

Pannenberg goes on to say that "Patristic and medieval Christology probably completely overlooked this side of the question of the extent of Jesus' knowledge." Rather than overlook it, I intend to discuss it in detail in this section.

Rahner says a bit more about this topic but doesn't provide the argument. He writes:

> It could be shown quite easily that freedom also always demands the wisely unobstructed area of freedom and its willingly accepted emptiness, as the dark ground of freedom itself and as the condition making it possible. In other words, there is certainly a nescience which renders the finite person's exercise of freedom possible within the still continuing drama of his history. This nescience is, therefore, more perfect for this exercise of freedom than knowledge which would suspend this exercise.   (Rahner 1966, 202)

In the above passage, his view seems to be that ignorance is required for the free act of a finite person. Now, Christ is not a finite person. Yet he is acting with finite faculties when he acts by means of his human nature. And so, what he says here may well be applied to Christ. In fact, this passage is from a discussion of Christ's knowledge. So, I take it that he wants to apply what he says here to Christ as well. Later in the same work, Rahner writes:

> [F]reedom in the open field of decisions is better than if this room for freedom were filled with knowledge of such a nature as to suffocate this freedom . . . the objective perception of every individual object right down to the last detail would be the end of freedom.   (Rahner 1966, 214)

Here Rahner gives some reason for thinking that the Foreknowledge Thesis implies the falsity of the Human Freedom Thesis. Rahner doesn't give the argument explicitly, and I do not here claim to be giving the argument he would have given. I do not know exactly how he thought the argument would go. But I do think that an argument like the one offered in Section IV could be the sort of argument he had in mind.

In the following, I will present an argument for the Conditional that begins with three plausible theses concerning deliberation: that freedom requires deliberation, that deliberation requires multiple options (i.e., courses of action), and that someone's being certain that she will not do something forecloses that something's being an option. In Section III I will present and defend each thesis. Then I will argue in Section IV, given the truth of these three theses, that the Conditional is true. In Section V I will challenge this argument.

The argument I will discuss in this section has similarities to the argument from Agency discussed by David Hunt and Tomas Kapitan.[1] The difference

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[1] See David Hunt and Tomas Kapitan (Kapitan 1991; Hunt 1992; Kapitan 1994; Hunt 1996; Kapitan 1997). There are also other problems lurking in the area of the disparate knowledges of Christ. See, for instance, Gorman (2000a).

between them is that where Kapitan's argument focuses on whether or not someone can intend to do something while knowing he will do it, mine focuses on whether or not one can deliberate about doing something she is certain she will not do. Kapitan's argument is rooted, primarily, in the will, in the act of intending, mine in the intellect, in the act of deliberating. Differences aside, the reader will be able to see how the responses I discuss to the Problem of Deliberation can be easily modified to become responses to the argument from Agency. Kapitan's argument has received much attention in the literature, but the argument I give here, so far as I know, has not received any.[2]

III. THE AUXILIARY THESES

In this Section I provide the three auxiliary theses which will become the premises of the Argument from Deliberation.

III.a. Certainty Precludes Deliberation

The first thesis is that certainty precludes deliberation; that is, an agent's certainty that she will not perform a particular action at a particular future time precludes the agent's ability to deliberate about performing that action at that time. By "deliberation," I mean what Aquinas meant by *consilium*, the intellective act of inquiry concerning means to a willed end.[3] Deliberation is a *figuring out* of what course of action to pursue. It is an act of the intellect, not an act of the will; it is not a choosing, but a reasoning.

If Susan believes with certainty at an earlier time, $t1$, that she will not A at $t2$, then she cannot bring herself to deliberate at $t1$ about whether to A at $t2$.

The best way I know to show the truth of the thesis that certainty precludes deliberation is by marshaling examples in its favor. Here are three examples that show, to my mind, that one cannot genuinely deliberate concerning something one is certain one will not do.

The first example: suppose I go out to the woodpile to cut some wood. On the stump there are two things: a stick of butter and an axe. Can I genuinely

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[2] E. J. Coffman (2011) presents an argument inspired by Kapitan's argument. His argument focuses on making choices between multiple options, each of which is viewed as epistemically possible by the chooser, and of which there is no one uniquely rational choice to make. The argument that he considers is similar to mine insofar as both focus on the effects of foreknowing what one will choose, but different from mine insofar as his focuses on choosing and epistemic possibility, whereas mine focuses on deliberating and being certain one will not choose a certain "option."

[3] See *ST* I-II q.14.

deliberate between these two items as options for chopping wood? I think not. I think I could go through the motions of doing so (say, to amuse my son), but I couldn't genuinely deliberate between them as options. And that's because I am certain that the stick of butter is not an option; that is, I am maximally confident that it is not a viable means to my end of chopping the wood. I will not chop the wood with a stick of butter. Furthermore, even if I'm mistaken (say, the stick of butter is a cleverly disguised light saber that would make my job significantly easier), my (erroneous) certainty precludes my seeing the stick of butter as a live option.

One might object that the real reason one can't deliberate in this case is because one believes with certainty that one *cannot* do the action in question, and not merely that one *will not* do the action in question. I believe with certainty that it is not physically possible for butter to cut wood; it is *that* belief, says the objector, that renders me unable to deliberate concerning cutting wood with butter.

In response to this objection, I think that it is the certainty that I will not do it, no matter how it is gained, that psychologically bars me from the act of deliberation. It just so happens that in many cases, our certainty of the *will not* is due to certainty of the *cannot*. But that's not necessarily the case. To show that we can have certainty of the *will not* that precludes our ability to deliberate without having certainty of the *cannot* consider another example.

A second example. Suppose that I'm certain that I'm a werewolf.[4] I believe with certainty that tonight there will be a full moon, and I also believe with certainty that if there is a full moon, then I will not be rational after nightfall, since I'll be all wolfed out, menacing the local population.[5] I also (let's assume) believe with certainty, based on these other beliefs, that I will not be curled up under a blanket, sipping decaffeinated tea, doing long division tonight at 11pm. Now ask: can I, say, at 4pm, deliberate between doing long division at 11pm or something else? I think not. Given my state of certainty about the future (whether or not I'm right about my lycanthropy or the lunar cycle), I cannot view doing long division at 11pm as a viable possibility. And because of that, I cannot genuinely deliberate between doing long division and doing something else.

In such a state, I do not believe it is logically impossible for me to do long division tonight at 11pm. And I need not even believe it to be physically

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[4] The reader might balk here, since she might think that werewolves are impossible. Happily, considering this scenario does not require the reader to think lycanthropy is possible. She merely must believe that it is possible for someone to be certain that he is a werewolf. One can be certain that one is something, even if that something is impossible to be. Certainty is not factive.

[5] Actually, were I to believe these things, I would not believe that I'd be menacing the local population after nightfall. Rather, I would take a cue from the reasonable Wolfman in *The Monster Squad* (Dekker 1987), and I would petition the local police department to lock me up for the evening. In which case I would believe I'd be all wolfed out in a local prison cell. I still wouldn't be able to deliberate about doing long division, though.

impossible. Perhaps I am agnostic about whether there is a cure for lycan-thropy, and also agnostic about whether it could be administered to me before moonrise. So here I do not believe it is physically impossible for me to do long division at 11pm, but I still cannot deliberate between doing long division and menacing the local population at 11pm. If I do not believe that it is physically impossible for me to do long division at 11pm, it cannot be my believing that it is physically impossible for me to do long division at 11pm that keeps me from being able to deliberate about whether to do long division at 11pm.

A third example. Were I brainwashed by an ingenious conman into think-ing that, while it is logically and physically possible that I do thus-and-such, I will not, in fact, do thus-and-such, and were the brainwashing so thorough that I had no shred of doubt, no moment's uncertainty that I will not do thus-and-such, then, when considering my options for what to do at the later time when I could thus-and-such, thus-and-suching will not be on that list of deliberative options. Suppose that I am so entrenched in an organization, say, a cult, that I believe that the words of the leader *will* come to pass—not that they *must* come to pass, for God might not have called this woman to be his spokesperson. And suppose she says, in her analog to an *ex cathedra* proclamation, that I will not A at *t*. I am as certain as I can be that she is speaking the truth. If I were to list all the viable or genuine means of attaining my ends, A-ing at *t* would not be among them. A-ing at *t* would not be an option among which I deliberate, were I to believe, as strongly as I could believe anything, that I will not A at *t*. The claim here is that if I find myself with maximal certainty that I will not do something, then I cannot view doing it as a genuine option for deliberation concerning the means to my ends.

Consider the following argument.

(i) S includes A as a deliberative option for what to do at t only if S views A as a viable alternative for action at *t*.

(ii) If S is certain that she will not A at *t*, then she does not view A as a viable option for what to do at *t*.

(iii) Thus, if S includes A as a deliberative option for what to do at *t*, then it is false that S is certain that she will not A at *t*.   (From i, ii HS.)[6]

(iv) If S is certain that she will not A at *t*, then it is false that S includes A as a deliberative option for what to do at *t*.   (From iii, contraposition.)

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[6] Yes, dear reader, one must contrapose ii in order to use Hypothetical Syllogism to yield iii. I didn't see it as needful to put it up there in the argument. Not when I knew you'd meet me down here.

The first claim is a stipulated definition for when something counts as a deliberative option. The second claim is supported by the previous three examples. The third claim follows from the first two (by hypothetical syllogism). The fourth, a statement of the first auxiliary thesis, is the third contraposed.

Finally, as an appeal to authority, consider the thought of Aristotle and Aquinas. Aristotle might well have believed something similar.[7] Though he does not state the principle explicitly, his general thought seems to be that the less doubt we have about something, the less we can deliberate about it. Now, to have certainty about something is to have no doubt at all about it. And so, it seems Aristotle would say that certain foreknowledge would preclude deliberation. Aquinas likely affirmed something similar as well. In his question on deliberation in the *Summa Theologiae* (I–II q.14 a.1 ad.2), Aquinas approvingly quotes Damascene in saying "God takes not counsel: those only take counsel who lack knowledge."[8] Damascene's point is that deliberation is for those who lack certainty; since God has certainty, he does not deliberate. The certainty of any other intellect, given the first premise, should likewise preclude deliberation about that topic.

I take the above examples, argument, and appeals to authority as evidence for the thesis that I will call *Certainty Precludes Deliberation* (CPD):

Certainty Precludes Deliberation: For any human agent, S, any action, A, and any future time, *t*: if S is certain that she will not do A at *t*, then S cannot include A as a deliberative option for what to do at *t*.[9]

This concludes my motivation of Certainty Precludes Deliberation.

III.b. Deliberation Requires Options

The second auxiliary thesis is that deliberation requires multiple options; that is, one cannot deliberate without multiple deliberative options. Deliberation is a process of judging which course of action one should perform among the viable alternatives. This seems true by definition. This seems supported by our

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[7] See *Nichomachean Ethics*, bk 3, chap. 3.

[8] For more on Aquinas on deliberation, as seen through the lens of Lonergan, see Moloney (2000, 28–33).

[9] Let a human agent be an agent with a human nature. So, both Christ and Peter count as human agents in this sense of the term. Note that this principle is distinct from the principle that David Hunt argues against. He argues that the following is false: If S is certain that she will A, then she cannot deliberate about A-ing. The principle I employ here is not the same, insofar as my principle is about certainty of not doing something, whereas his is about certainty of doing something. See his (Hunt 1997), where he discusses this claim under the heading of the Problem of Agency. See also Rabinowicz (2002), Reichenbach (1984), Taylor (1964), van Inwagen (1986, 154–7) and Waller (1985) for discussion of similar theses.

use of the term "deliberate" as well. We say that we deliberate *between* or *among* options, and that we deliberate *whether* to do something *or* not. Can we deliberate but not deliberate between or among options, or not deliberate whether to do something or not?

Consider this situation. A judge tells the jury to deliberate about finding the man innocent, but not to deliberate *whether* to find him innocent *or guilty*, or to deliberate about whether to find him innocent of this *or that*. They are told to deliberate but forbidden from deliberating among options. If the jury were to follow the judge's order, what would their "deliberations" look like? What would they do? I have no idea.

The example of juridical deliberation provides evidence for the following thesis, which I will call *Deliberation Requires Options* (DRO):

Deliberation Requires Options:	For any human agent, S, any action, A, and any future time, *t*: if S does not believe that S has two or more deliberative options for what to do at *t*, then S cannot deliberate about what to do at *t*.

This concludes my motivation of Deliberation Requires Options.

III.c. Freedom Requires Deliberation

The third thesis is that at least one important sort of freedom—in fact, one sort of freedom vital for human flourishing—requires deliberation; that is, if a human cannot deliberate about options for action, then that human lacks one sort of freedom vital for human flourishing.

Many people in the contemporary debate on freedom think that having the ability to deliberate among multiple options is necessary for freedom. Eddy Nahmias, for instance, writes of the "Deliberation and Control" condition being a necessary condition for freedom. He writes of the main intuitions driving the contemporary discussion of free will:

> One intuition locates the essence of free will in the abilities of an agent to deliberate about what she really wants to do and to act on those deliberations. Free will (of the sort tied to moral responsibility) requires that an agent can determine what she really wants, that she is not compelled by external or internal forces to act against it, and that she can control her actions accordingly. Call this the "Deliberation and Control" condition (DC) since it emphasizes that the agent must possess the general capacities to deliberate effectively in light of her desires and reasons and then to control her actions in light of her deliberations.
>
> (Nahmias 2006, 627–8)

Nahmias claims that one central intuition concerning free will requires that the agent be able to deliberate about viable actions in order to be free. If, for

some reason, someone lacks the ability to deliberate about viable actions, then that person is not free. Aquinas seems to agree in his commentary on Aristotle's *On Interpretation*:

> Here the Philosopher accepts it as an evident principle that man is the principle of future things. However, he is not the principle of future things unless he deliberates about a thing and then does it. In those things that men do without deliberation they do not have dominion over their acts, i.e., they do not judge freely about things to be done, but are moved to act by a kind of natural instinct such as is evident in the case of brute animals.
>
> (Aquinas 1962, 112 Peri Herm b.1 l.14 para. 5)

Here Aquinas reads Aristotle as claiming that freedom requires deliberation. Nevertheless, one might think that the requirement of deliberation for freedom is too strong a requirement, for a few reasons. Below I provide two such reasons.

First, if God is atemporally eternal, and if deliberation is a temporal process, then the divine intellect is in no position to deliberate. This, though, does not preclude divine freedom. Or, at least no eternalist would affirm that it does. If divine free action does not require deliberation, the objector might ask, why does human freedom?[10]

Furthermore, there are at least some times when we act spontaneously, but not unfreely. For instance, the witty banter at lunch is often done without deliberating concerning the next thing to say. Such deliberation would break the flow of conversation, just as having to contemplate each note one plays would ruin the melody. But both witty banter and melodic guitar playing can be done freely. So deliberation is not necessary for freedom.[11]

Nevertheless, there is an important sort of freedom that involves deliberation for temporal entities. Not everything we freely choose to do is done in a knee-jerk fashion (as the banter) or habituated (as the guitar playing). Rather, some of our free actions—in fact, the ones we value most—are done after deliberation. The actions that we count as "most deeply mine" are the ones that I decide to perform on the basis of deliberation. In other words, Nahmias' Deliberation and Control (DC) condition is a necessary condition for the sort of freedom we value most.

One way—though a rough way—to measure the importance of something to our flourishing is to compare it with other ways we could flourish and see which we would rather keep, were one to be stricken from us.[12] Suppose, for instance, that you were to learn that you either had to lose your left arm or your left leg. You weigh the two (the options, not the appendages) and

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[10] Kevin Timpe (2015b) considers this question. Also, see Couehoven (2012).

[11] Aquinas makes the same point, that some actions do not require deliberation (those done by art or by rote) in *ST* I-II q.14 a.4.

[12] This is what we do this in the game Would You Rather . . .

consider which would hinder your flourishing more. In this case, we could ask similar questions using loss of the ability to deliberate as an option. Would you rather lose your ability to use your left hand, or your ability to deliberate? I don't have a worked-out ranking of the things I would rather lose than my ability to deliberate, but I do think that there are many things that are clearly useful for my flourishing that I would prefer to lose before I lose my ability to deliberate. And that gives me evidence to believe that my ability to deliberate is vital for my flourishing.[13]

I take the authorities cited and the argument from measuring importance to provide evidence for the following principle, which I will call *Freedom Requires Deliberation* (FRD):

> *Freedom Requires*   For any human agent, S, any action, A, and any
> *Deliberation*:   future time, *t*: if S cannot deliberate about what to
>   do at *t*, then S lacks one sort of freedom vital for
>   human flourishing at *t*.

This concludes my motivation of Deliberation Requires Options. In what follows, I will argue that, given the three auxiliary theses concerning deliberation, the Conditional is true.

IV. THE ARGUMENT FROM DELIBERATION PRESENTED

Consider some actions and some time at which Christ performs those actions, say, Christ's (complex) action of running the moneychangers out of the temple at a certain time.[14] Call the time $t1$. Now consider some time prior to the event in question ($t0$) and ask whether Christ was (at $t0$) free with respect to what to do at $t1$.

If the Foreknowledge Thesis is true, then Christ was certain at $t0$ that he would do nothing but run the moneychangers out at $t1$. Due to that certainty, he was unable to consider any other actions as deliberative options for action at $t1$. But since he could not consider anything besides running the moneychangers out of the temple as a deliberative option for action at $t1$, he was

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[13] It is true that this only gives me a subjective measure of relative needfulness for flourishing. I might well have it wrong.

[14] See Matt. 21: 12–13; Mark 11:15–17; Luke 19:45–6; and John 2:13–17. Here I am including all the things that Christ is doing at that time. So, for instance, if he is walking and talking at the same time, then by the term "running the moneychangers out of the temple," I mean to include both the walking and the talking (and whatever else he is doing then).

unable to deliberate about what to do at *t*1. And since the ability to deliberate is a necessary condition for one sort of freedom vital for human flourishing, Christ lacked that sort of freedom at *t*0 with respect to action at *t*1. There was nothing special about my choice of example, and so we can generalize to all times. Thus, if the Foreknowledge Thesis is true, then Christ lacked one sort of freedom vital for human flourishing; that is, the Conditional is true.

Every action in this class of actions—the class of actions in which an agent chooses what to do, at least in part, due to deliberation—would be impossible for Christ. He would be missing out on one sort of freedom vital for human flourishing: freely, rationally deciding what one will do. Since one main motivation for the Foreknowledge Thesis is the desire that Christ's soul be perfected, his missing out on this sort of freedom vital for human flourishing would be contrary to this motivation.

One can put this argument into a clearer form as follows:

1. [CPD] For any human agent, S, any action, A, and any future time, *t*: if S is certain that she will not do A at *t*, then S cannot include A as a deliberative option for what to do at *t*.

2. [DRO] For any human agent, S, any action, A, and any future time, *t*: if S does not believe that S has two or more deliberative options for what to do at *t*, then S cannot deliberate about what to do at *t*.

3. [FRD] For any human agent, S, any action, A, and any future time, *t*: if S cannot deliberate about what to do at *t*, then S lacks one sort of freedom vital for human flourishing at *t*.

4. [FT] Suppose that Christ, in his created human intellect, had certain, infallible, exhaustive foreknowledge.   (Assumed for conditional proof.)

5. At all prior times during Christ's life during which he considered his activity at *t*1, he was certain that he was not going to do anything besides run the moneychangers out of the temple at *t*1.   (From 4.)

6. Christ could not include any action besides running the moneychangers out of the temple as a deliberative option for what to do at *t*1.   (From 1, 5.)[15]

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[15] Recall that I am using the term "running the moneychangers out of the temple" to refer to all the things Christ is doing at this time. It refers to the whole conjunction of acts that go together to make up all that Christ does at *t*1.

7. Christ did not believe that he has two or more deliberative options for what to do at $t1$. (From 6.)

8. Christ could not deliberate about what to do at $t1$. (From 2, 7.)

9. Christ lacked one sort of freedom vital for human flourishing at $t1$. (From 3, 8.)

10. If the Foreknowledge Thesis is true, then Christ lacked one sort of freedom vital for human flourishing at $t1$. (From 4–9, conditional proof.)

Nothing hangs on the particular example I chose. This argument runs just as well when based on any action that Christ performed at any time.[16] Thus, we can generalize to the claim:

11. If the Foreknowledge Thesis is true, then Christ lacked one sort of freedom vital for human flourishing.

The conclusion, 11, implies the truth of the Conditional. Thus, the Conditional is true. We have an argument which purports to prove the Conditional from three plausible premises, each of which I have defended in a previous section. The argument is valid. How might one respond to this argument?

V. RESPONSES TO THE ARGUMENT FROM DELIBERATION

In this Section I will consider five responses to the Argument from Deliberation.

V.a. Deny 6 and 7

A first response to this argument might go as follows. Christ did, in fact, have multiple options, so long as he did two things at a time. Suppose that at $t1$ he begins both to overturn a table and to say, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers" (Mark 11:17). Then he does two actions at a time, and so has at least two things to deliberate among as deliberative options. And so, *contra*

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[16] I say "any action that Christ performed at any time" here. But Freedom Requires Deliberation requires deliberation, and deliberation comes *before* actions. Thus, one might balk and say that Christ's first action might not count as a viable substitution in this argument for "any action," since there would be no time before that action in which to deliberate. That's fair. Rule out the first action if you want. I promise you, dear reader, that I'm attempting to become less annoyingly pedantic. At least this instance only made it into a footnote, not the main text. Baby steps.

premises 6 and 7, Christ did have multiple deliberative options open to him at $t0$ when contemplating what to do at $t1$.

In reply to this first response, to have multiple deliberative options open to one, one cannot be certain that one will not do otherwise (given Certainty Precludes Deliberation). But Christ is certain that he will not do otherwise than both overturn a table and begin speaking. For this response to work, Christ would need to be uncertain about whether he would overturn and speak, or speak but not overturn, or overturn but not speak, or do neither. But he was not uncertain about this, given the Foreknowledge Thesis. And so, the response does not work.

V.b. Challenge Certainty Precludes Deliberation, Part 1

A second response to this argument is to challenge Certainty Precludes Deliberation. One might claim that someone is in a position to deliberate between multiple options provided that he can assess the pros and cons of his actions and analyze the counterfactuals relevant to both the action and other, incompatible actions. One might think that this is sufficient for deliberation even if he knows that he will not do anything but this particular thing. For instance, suppose Christ is contemplating driving the moneychangers out at $t1$ or not driving them out at $t1$. He knows that he will drive them out at $t1$. But he can still consider the pros and cons of so driving them out. He can still assess the relevant counterfactuals about what would happen were he not to drive them out. And that, the interlocutor says, is sufficient for deliberation.

In reply to the second response, I claim that assessing pros and cons and analyzing counterfactuals is not sufficient for deliberation. I can assess the pros and cons and analyze the counterfactuals about curling up under a blanket, sipping decaffeinated tea, and doing long division tonight at 11pm. That, however, implies nothing at all about whether I can deliberate about doing it. I can think, "sipping that tea would have the benefit of supplying me with antioxidants and were I to do long division under this blanket, the blanket would be warmer than room temperature," whether or not I deliberate about it.

Likewise, you can consider the pros and cons about killing the person you love most for insurance money (pro: financial security; con: murder of my beloved, sadness at her absence, stain of mortal sin, etc.), and you can analyze the relevant counterfactuals ("if I were to get away with it, I would have a lot more money"), but, surely, that alone is insufficient for *deliberating* about killing her. I did not, just now, in considering what pros and cons to include in this example, and in judging that the counterfactual provided is true, *deliberate about killing my wife*! (I love you, Dear.) I conclude that being able to weigh the pros and cons of an action and being able to analyze the

counterfactuals involving the action are insufficient for deliberation, contrary to the second response.

V.c. Challenge Certainty Precludes Deliberation, Part 2

A third response to the argument again challenges Certainty Precludes Deliberation. The objector claims that the following is true: if an agent believes he has multiple powers or collections of powers, P1, and P2, and neither power is hindered, and the employment of neither power is contrary to the agent's character in a deep way, and he believes it to be logically possible that he employ P1 at *t*, and logically possible that he employ P2 at *t*, then he can deliberate between employing P1 or P2, even if he knows with certainty that, in fact, he will not employ P2 at *t*.

Apply this sufficient condition for deliberation to Christ. Christ has the collection of powers to sit and remain silent, and also the collection of powers to stand, overturn tables, and speak. Employing neither collection at *t* is contrary to his character. Neither is either power collection hindered. He believed it to be logically possible that he employ either collection of powers at *t*. (It was a truth about the future at that time, and he knew all truths about the future, and so he knew this one, thus he believed it.) And so, on this sufficient condition for deliberation, he could deliberate about remaining seated and quiet, even though he knew with certainty he would not do that.

If this sufficient condition for deliberation were true, then premise 1 would be false, and we would lose our motivation for affirming sub-conclusion 6. And so, were this sufficient condition for deliberation true, the argument I've called the Problem from Deliberation would be unsound.

Consider a case, though, that appears to fulfill the purported sufficient condition for deliberation but isn't a case of deliberation. I believe I have the powers to sit here in my office chair or head home early to deep-clean my kitchen. Neither set of powers is hindered, neither activity is contrary to my character in a deep way, and I think both actions are logically possible for me to do in the next few minutes. Have I thus deliberated about going home to clean my kitchen? I tell you what: that didn't feel like deliberation.

I do not understand the psychology of someone who says both "I am certain that I will not do this" and also "I will treat this as a legitimate live option for future activity." I can see *pretending* that it is a live option. I can see going through the motions of deliberation as a formality. But just as I cannot see the reasonableness of saying "*This* is true, but I do not believe it," so likewise I do not see the reasonableness in saying "I am certain that I will not do this, but it is a real option for choice for me." This no doubt may be a defect in my imagination. For those with equally deficient imaginations, I offer two more alternatives for response below.

V.d. Distinguish Certainty Precludes Deliberation

A fourth response to the argument goes as follows. As briefly discussed at the end of Chapter 7, Section II.b, Christ did not have occurrent knowledge, at all times, in his human intellect, of all future events. He didn't, for instance, when flipping a table at $t1$, have occurrent knowledge of every instant of your life, including this one. Or, at least, we need not say that he *had* to have such occurrent knowledge. But then, if he didn't need to have such occurrent knowledge at all times, perhaps he didn't have the relevant occurrent knowledge at the times when he was to deliberate about what to do. For instance, suppose when deciding at $t0$ whether to run out the moneychangers, he didn't have occurrent knowledge of what he would do at $t1$. Then we could say that he wasn't occurrently certain of what he was to do at $t1$. But (we might also say), only *occurrent* certainty is what precludes deliberation. And so, at that time, he could deliberate about what to do. And so we can deny the inference from 1 and 5 to 6: we can say that deliberation is precluded by occurrent certainty, and he didn't have that at $t0$ concerning his actions at $t1$, and so the claim that his deliberative options were, at $t0$, reduced to one for action at $t1$ is unsupported.

In reply to the fourth response, I grant that occurrent certainty is what precludes deliberation, and I grant that Christ needn't have occurrent knowledge of all future times at every moment of his existence. But I deny that this means that he would lack occurrent knowledge (and hence certainty) when trying to deliberate. It seems to me that dispositional knowledge becomes occurrent knowledge the moment one turns one's mind toward the dispositional knowledge. And so, the moment Christ turns his mind to whether to do A at $t1$, he would have occurrent knowledge of what he in fact will do at $t1$ (given the Foreknowledge Thesis). And so even if he doesn't always have occurrent knowledge of all future events, he has it at all the moments at which he needs not to have it in order to deliberate. I note, though, that if the reader believes that Christ could somehow block the relevant knowledge from changing from merely dispositional to occurrent, then such a block would allow for additional deliberative options.

V.e. Deny Freedom Requires Deliberation

The fifth response, my preferred response to the Problem of Deliberation, is to deny Freedom Requires Deliberation. Figuring out what course of action to pursue—that is, deliberating—is important for those who are unsure about what to do in some circumstances. And since all of us mere humans are unsure about what to do with some regularity while on earth, deliberating is

important to us. But it isn't important to us qua having a human nature. It is important to us qua ignorant of the true good. Were we lacking the ability to deliberate, we would routinely be unable to act freely for the perceived good, since, often, we only come to perceive the good by means of deliberation.

Given the Foreknowledge Thesis, Christ, even in his human intellect, is not ignorant of the true good. He, unlike mere humans, need not deliberate as a means to discovering the course of action to pursue. And so, his ability to act freely for the perceived good is not tethered to the ability to deliberate, as your or my ability to act freely for the perceived good is.

Were it true that Christ did not deliberate, then, it would not make him unable to act freely for the perceived good. He would not be missing out on a perfection, since deliberation in service to freely choosing is only a perfection relative to the imperfection of lacking knowledge of the true good. And so, to deny that Freedom Requires Deliberation in the case of those who have certain, infallible foreknowledge of their own actions is not to deny of them a perfection.

Thus, those who affirm the Foreknowledge Thesis because they believe that Christ's soul must have all perfections would not see themselves as denying a perfection of Christ when denying that Freedom Requires Deliberation in his case. In fact, they may think the opposite: to affirm that Freedom Requires Deliberation in the case of Christ is to imply an imperfection of Christ, that being a lack of knowledge of the true good. Aquinas seemed to think something similar. He writes (*ST* III q.18, a.4 ad.2), when considering a similar objection about Christ's free will: "Therefore it is plain that doubt or inquiry belong to choice not essentially, but only when it is in an ignorant nature."[17]

In this way, then, by denying that freedom requires deliberation, one can deny the soundness of the Problem of Deliberation.

VI. THE PROBLEM OF EXPLANATORY PRIORITY

This section focuses on a second way of attempting to show that the Conditional is true. Consider the relation of explanatory priority. A is explanatorily prior to B when A is at least a partial explanation for B. For instance, I leave work at 4:30pm, at least in part, because I believe that my wife has an appointment at 5pm. This belief is explanatorily prior to my leaving work at 4:30pm. Explanatory priority is transitive. If this belief is at least partially explained by my wife's telling me that she has an appointment today at 5pm,

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[17] For more discussion of Aquinas on this issue, in particular, with respect to the thought of St John Damascene, see Barnes (2012, 139–43).

then my leaving work at 4:30pm is at least partially explained by my wife's telling me that she has an appointment today at 5pm. Note, though, that nothing is explanatorily prior to itself. It is incoherent for me to say that I leave work at 4:30pm, and this is explained, at least in part, by my leaving work at 4:30pm.

Alexander Pruss (2007, sect. 2) and Michael Rota (2010) both discuss the following difficult case of prophecy, which is useful for seeing the difficulty that arises for Christ's knowledge. Jesus tells Peter that Peter will deny him three times before the cock crows. Suppose that Peter denies Jesus, at least in part, because Jesus foretold it.[18] Say, for instance, Jesus' foretelling puts the thought in his mind, and he thinks, "well, my Lord *did* tell me it would happen like this . . . " And suppose, as seems right, that Jesus knows that Peter will deny him three times before the cock crows, at least in part, because Peter does in fact act thusly.[19] In this case, Christ foretells the denial at least in part because Peter denies, and Peter denies at least in part because Christ foretells. Thus, by the transitivity of explanation, Christ foretells at least in part because Christ foretells. But this entails that Christ's foretelling is explanatorily prior to itself, which is impossible. What has gone wrong here?

Rota and Pruss both point to the same solution. They both reject that Peter denies Jesus, at least in part, because Jesus foretells it. And they both point to scriptural reasons for thinking that this is the right reading of the event.[20] So, one way to get out of the difficulty is to deny that the earlier foretelling has any sort of explanatory role in the later action. If Peter's denial explains, at least in part, Christ's believing that Peter will deny, and Christ's believing in turn explains, at least in part, Christ's foretelling of Peter's denial, then Christ's foretelling cannot explain, even in part, Peter's denial.[21] This response is adequate in the case of Peter's denial. But what if we change the example from an action of Peter's to an action of Christ's? What if, as on the Foreknowledge Thesis, Christ foreknows his own actions? Does such foreknowing hinder his own freedom, or imply an explanatory circle?

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[18]   Matt. 26:34, Mark 14:30, Luke 22:31–4, and John 13:38. A background assumption is that if Peter did not remember the prophecy at the time he denied Christ, then the foretelling played no explanatory role in his so denying. One might question, though, whether it is possible for the foretelling to play an explanatory role in Peter's denying even if he did not remember it at the time he chose to deny.

[19]   I discuss one way of understanding Jesus' belief in relation to Peter's action in Chapter 7, Section V.e.

[20]   Matthew (26:75), Mark (14:72), and Luke (22:61) all claim that after the denial Peter then remembered Christ's foretelling.

[21]   This is a paraphrase of Rota (2010, 184): "If a human action A explains (at least in part) why (B) God believes something, and God's believing that something in turn explains (at least in part) why God causes an earlier event C to occur, then C cannot explain (even in part) the occurrence of A."

VII. THE ARGUMENT PRESENTED

Consider this case, discussed above: Christ freely wills, with his human will, to drive the moneychangers out of the temple at $t1$. His freely willing to run out the moneychangers explains, at least in part, his earlier knowing that he will run them out at $t1$. It had better not be that his earlier knowing that he will run them out explains, in any way, his later freely choosing to run them out. For, if his earlier knowing were to explain, in some way, his later choosing to run them out, then we would have an explanatory circle. His later choosing to run them out would explain, at least in part, his earlier knowing that he will run them out, and his earlier knowing would explain, at least in part, his later choosing to run them out. So, by transitivity of explanation, his choosing to run them out would explain, at least in part, his choosing to run them out. And that's incoherent.

One might put the argument this way (where "→" symbolizes material implication):

12. If the Foreknowledge Thesis is true and the Human Freedom Thesis is true, then it is possible that Christ's foreknowing that he will perform action B is explanatorily prior to his B-ing. $[(FT\&F)\rightarrow\Diamond EP(f,b)]$

13. It is necessary that Christ's B-ing is explanatorily prior to his foreknowing that he will perform action B. $[\Box EP(b,f)]$

14. It is not possible that (Christ's foreknowing that he will perform action B is explanatorily prior to his performing action B and Christ's B-ing is explanatorily prior to his foreknowing that he will perform action B). $[\sim\Diamond(EP(f,b)\&EP(b,f))]$

15. Thus, it is not possible that Christ's foreknowing that he will perform action B is explanatorily prior to his B-ing. $[\sim\Diamond(EP(f,b))$ from 13, 14.]

16. Thus, it is false that the Foreknowledge Thesis is true and the Human Freedom Thesis is true. $[\sim(FT\&F)$, from 12, 15 Modus Tollens.]

17. Thus, if the Foreknowledge Thesis is true, then the Human Freedom Thesis is false. $[FT\rightarrow\sim F$, from 16]

Step 17 is the Unfriendly Conditional mentioned in Section I of this chapter; it straightforwardly implies the Conditional. So, this argument is evidence for the truth of the Conditional. The argument is deductively valid. Thus, if the premises are true, we will have derived the truth of the Conditional. Are the premises true?

Premise 12 states that if Christ's human will was free, and if he had exhaustive and certain foreknowledge of all future states, then it is possible that that knowledge explains, at least in part, why he chooses something. But why think that?

It seems possible that Christ, prior to deciding what to do in a particular circumstance, could turn his attention to his knowledge of what he in fact will do. For instance, the Gospel of John (18:4) says that Christ, while in the garden, knew all that would befall him. One of those things he knew would befall him was his later discussion with Pilate, where he said (John 18:37), "Every one who is of the truth hears my voice." It seems possible, furthermore, that Christ, when later talking with Pilate, could recall his knowledge in the garden, and could, at least in part, say what he does because that was what he remembered he would say. I see no reason to doubt either of these possible seemings, or to doubt the possibility of their conjunction. If Christ knows the future, and he is free to turn his mind's eye hither and thither, what precludes the *mere possibility* of his turning his mind's eye to his future actions, and later recalling these in a moment of choice concerning those actions?[22]

Note that the above support for Premise 12 does not require that Christ, at any time in his actual life, was motivated by his foreknowledge in deciding how to act. The premise does not state that Christ acted in this way; it merely states that *it is possible that* Christ acted in this way. An objection to this premise fails, then, if it merely shows that Christ *did not* act in this way; it likewise fails if it merely shows that Christ *would not* act in this way. For an argument against this premise to succeed it must show that Christ *could not* act in this way.[23]

But if one supposes that Christ has fully accessible, certain foreknowledge of what he will do at every moment in his life, and that he is free in his choices of what he considers prior to deciding something, why couldn't he consider his knowledge of his future actions? And if he could consider them, why couldn't he be motivated by that consideration?

Consider an analogous case: nothing bars Christ from considering *someone else's* future actions when deciding what to do at a time. He considers Peter's future denying before mentioning that denying to Peter. Furthermore, it would be bizarre if that consideration played no explanatory role in Christ's saying what he said to Peter. But now if Christ can consider someone else's future actions and be motivated to action, at least in part, due to those actions, what bars him from considering and being motivated by *his own* future actions likewise? For my own part, I see no such impediment. And so, for my part, I concede the truth of the premise.

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[22] But see Rota's (2010, 182–4) ingenious Book of Life example for potential problems with Christ's using his knowledge of what he will do to decide what to do.

[23] I thank a referee for showing me the need to address this point.

Premise 13 gains support from the basic truth that 'truth depends on reality'. It is because things are the way they are that the truths are the way they are (for more on the relation between truth and reality, see Chapter 7, Section IV). Even if someone does not affirm truthmaker theory, one should still think that if it is true *that S does A*, this will be true, at least in part, because S does A. Furthermore, it is because the truths are the way they are that Christ knows what he knows. For his human intellect, and for every other human intellect, knowing that *p* is explained, at least in part, by its being true that *p*. And so, given the transitivity of explanatory priority, Christ's B-ing is explanatorily prior to his knowing that he will B. Moreover, if it could not but be that if it is true *that S does A*, this will be true, at least in part, because S does A, then, as Premise 13 says, it could not but be true that Christ's B-ing is explanatorily prior to his foreknowing that he performs action B.

Premise 14 tells us that it is impossible that both Christ's doing something is explanatorily prior to his knowing that he'll do it, and his knowing that he'll do it is also explanatorily prior to his doing it. It cannot be the case that both A explains B and B explains A. Nothing can be prior to itself in the same sense of "prior". And, in particular, Christ's acting as he acts cannot be both prior and posterior to Christ's foreknowing that he acts in that way.

Steps 15–17 are derived validly from Premises 12–14. If it is true that it is impossible that both X and Y be true (as 14 says) and it is also true that Y is true in all possible situations (as 13 says), then X can be true in no possible situations (as 15 says). For, if X were true in even one lone possible world, since Y is necessary, both X&Y would be true in that world. But then, contrary to 14, it is *not impossible* that X and Y both be true. Step 16 follows straightforwardly from a *modus tollens*, and 17 is equivalent to 16. But 17 straightforwardly implies the Conditional. Thus, if Christ had exhaustive, certain foreknowledge in his human intellect, then his human will was not free. How ought a proponent of Conciliar Christology, the Foreknowledge Thesis, and the Human Freedom Thesis to respond?

VIII. RESPONSES TO THE PROBLEM OF EXPLANATORY PRIORITY

In this Section I will discuss four responses to this argument.

VIII.a. The Puss/Rota Response

Consider, as a first response, the move that Rota and Pruss use in the Peter case. Can we claim that Christ's knowledge of what he will do does not play an explanatory role in what he chooses to do, owing to the fact that Christ

forgets what it is that he will do prior to making his free choices? It seems to me that we cannot. Peter can forget, and hence not know that Christ has foretold the denial. But Christ cannot forget or be ignorant of anything, given this exhaustive foreknowledge of his own actions. So, we cannot break the circle in explanation by appeal either to Christ's ignorance or by appeal to his forgetfulness. Moreover, we would need reason to think that he *must* forget in every possible case. For really the argument only requires the mere possibility of a case where he doesn't forget. Peter could have remembered. Why couldn't Christ have remembered?

VIII.b. Occurrent vs Dispositional Knowledge

As a second response, we might tweak the first. Perhaps we can claim that Christ suffers neither forgetfulness nor ignorance, and yet still does not consider what he will do prior to deciding what to do. For, we might say, as we considered in Section V.d, that Christ did not have *occurrent* knowledge at all times, in his human intellect, of all future events. If he did not need to have such occurrent knowledge at all times, perhaps he did not have the relevant occurrent knowledge at the times when he was choosing what to do. Then we could say that his decision at $t0$ of what he was to do at $t1$ was not explained, even partially, by his foreknowledge. And so, Premise 12 is false.

I offer two points in reply to this second response to the argument. First, grant as I did in Section V.d above, that occurrent foreknowledge is what is required for explanatory priority, and grant that Christ needn't have occurrent foreknowledge of all future times at every moment of his existence. I deny that this entails that he would lack occurrent knowledge (and hence certainty) when deciding what to do. As I said in that section, it seems to me that dispositional knowledge becomes occurrent knowledge the moment one turns one's mind toward the dispositional knowledge. And so, the moment Christ turns his mind to his future activity at $t1$, he would have occurrent knowledge of what he in fact will do at $t1$ (given the Foreknowledge Thesis). And so even if he doesn't always have occurrent knowledge of all future events, he has it at all the moments at which he needs not to have it in order to decide what to do.

One should note that the first reply to the second response is stronger than needed. For all the proponent of the argument from explanatory circularity needs is the *mere possibility* that Christ's dispositional knowledge of what he will do becomes occurrent knowledge. In light of this meager need of mere possibility, as a second reply to the second response to the Argument from Explanatory Priority, we can point out that the second response to the argument works only if it gives reason to think that Christ *could not* have occurrent knowledge of what he will do before he does it. But the second

response gives no reason to think that it is impossible for Christ to have such knowledge. And so, the second response fails.

VIII.c. Deny Premise 13

As a third potential response to the argument from explanatory priority, one might deny Premise 13 because one might think that Christ's future action is not explanatorily prior to his past foreknowledge. For instance, suppose one thought that the divine intellect's knowledge is explanatorily prior to all the happenings in the world, a view I discussed in Chapter 7, Section V.d, under the title of a response from Common Cause (some Thomists hold this view).[24] And suppose that God infuses the foreknowledge into Christ's created intellect in such a way that the total explanation for why Christ believes what he does about the future is that it was infused into him by the divine intellect. In that case, the divine knowledge is explanatorily prior, at least to some extent, to how the world is (in particular, to how Christ acts). Furthermore, the divine knowledge is also explanatorily prior to Christ's foreknowledge. And, the objector claims, the divine knowledge which is explanatorily prior to Christ's foreknowledge does not involve or employ Christ's future action as a means to explaining his foreknowledge. In that case, there would be no worry of explanatory circularity, since at least one half of the circle does not obtain—the future action does not explain, even in part, the past foreknowledge.

Suppose this story is right. God's knowledge is the common cause both of how the world is, and of Christ's foreknowledge, which God infuses into Christ's human intellect. We might still ask: why does God infuse *these* beliefs into Christ's human intellect, rather than a set of beliefs that contains all falsehoods? And here, I think the explanation would be: God infuses these beliefs because these are the ones that get reality right; they are the ones that are true. Christ's foreknowing that he will B is explained, at least in part, by God's infusing such knowledge into his created human intellect. And God's infusing such knowledge into his created human intellect is explained, at least in part, by the world's being the way it is, and, in particular, by Christ's future B-ing. Thus, by the transitivity of explanation, Christ's future B-ing explains, at least in part, Christ's foreknowing that he will B. And so even if, as the objector maintains, Christ's future action is not explanatorily prior to his foreknowledge in any direct manner, I still think there is reason to deny that it is not explanatorily prior in some way or other. For, there is reason to

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[24] Eleonore Stump (2005, 118–19) cites Fr Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange (1934, 546–7) as a proponent of this view.

think that even if the divine knowledge is ultimately explanatorily prior to all that occurs in the world, it is still, contrary to the claims of the objector, because the world is a certain way that God infuses these exact beliefs into the created human intellect of Christ. I don't think that this response, even if true, would show that Premise 13 is false. There's still an explanatory dependence—even if causal independence—between how the world is and what Christ believes.

VIII.d. Distinguish Senses of Priority

In a fourth response to this argument, the response I favor, one can distinguish Premise 14. I concede that it is impossible for X to be explanatorily prior to Y and Y to be explanatorily prior to X, when explanatory priority is understood in the same sense in both cases. But I deny that it is impossible for X to be explanatorily prior to Y and Y to be explanatorily prior to X, when explanatory priority is understood in *different* senses. Consider an Aristotelian analogy. While it is impossible for X to be causally prior to Y and for Y to be causally prior to X in the same sense (e.g., efficient causation), it is not impossible for X to be causally prior to Y and for Y to be causally prior to X in different senses. Aquinas gives the example of walking: walking is the efficient cause of health, and health the final cause of walking.[25] If it makes sense to say that there are two notions of explanatory priority in the problem of explanatory priority, then we can distinguish explanatory priority into those senses and conclude that the argument is invalid due to equivocation.

I believe that there are two senses of priority in play here. We can call them motivational priority and unique truthmaker priority, and define them as follows:

X is motivationally prior to Y	if and only if X is at least part of the reason why some agent, S, acted to bring about Y.
X is prior to Y in the unique truthmaker sense if and only if	Y is a belief or knowledge state and, necessarily, X is all or part of any truthmaker for the propositional content of Y.[26]

Some examples of what I mean by "the propositional content of Y" may be of help here. If I know that you are coming over for dinner, then the propositional

content of that knowledge state, as I mean the term "propositional content of that knowledge state", is the truthbearer *that you are coming over for dinner*.[27]

Consider some examples. As an example of motivational priority, one event is my coming home early, and another is my wife's telling me that she has an appointment at 5pm, and at least part of the reason I acted to bring it about that I come home early is because my wife told me what she did. As an example of unique truthmaker priority, Bob's existing is prior in the unique truthmaker sense to my belief that Bob exists since *that Bob exists* is a truthbearer, and nothing that doesn't include Bob could be a truthmaker for that proposition. Bob is also a truthmaker for *that something exists* and *that a human exists*, though he is not a *unique* truthmaker for either. He is not a unique truthmaker insofar as there are things that are not, or do not include Bob (e.g., you or me) that could be truthmakers for *that something exists* or *that a human exists*.

By my lights, Premise 12 employs motivational priority but not unique truthmaker priority, and Premise 13 employs unique truthmaker priority but not motivational priority. In what follows, I will argue for these claims.

One plausible way to understand Premise 12 is to take it to claim that if both the Foreknowledge Thesis and the Human Freedom Thesis are true, then it is possible that part of the reason why Christ chooses to do what he does in at least one circumstance is because he knows he will do it. Focusing on the consequent, we see that it is an assertion about his motivations, that is, the reasons why someone does something. The argument I marshaled in favor of Premise 12 in a previous section assumed it to be a form of motivational priority that was in question in the consequent. So, there is some reason to understand Premise 12 as employing motivational priority.

Premise 13, though, does not employ motivational priority. A necessary condition for an explanatory claim to be a claim of motivational priority is that it express why someone intends something. Premise 13, however, does not express why Christ intends to foreknow his B-ing. It expresses why it is that something is foreknown, but it is silent about what motivates Christ to foreknow. (One might think that the act of foreknowing is not the sort of thing that Christ is *motivated* to do.) And so, Premise 13 does not employ motivational priority.

Premise 13, instead, is plausibly understood as expressing the priority of being to knowing. It gets its intuitive pull from the claim that for Christ to

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[27] It would in many ways be simpler to speak of unique truthmaker priority holding between a truthbearer and a truthmaker, rather than between a belief or knowledge state of a truthbearer and a truthmaker. The simpler definition will not apply to the argument in Section VII, though, since the relata of the explanatory priority relation in Premises 12 and 13 are foreknowledge states and actions. And while foreknowledge states require as a necessary condition the truth of that which is foreknown, Christ's-foreknowing-that-he-will-B-at-*t*1 is not the right sort of thing to be true or false, and so is not, itself, a truthbearer.

know that he does *exactly this*, it must be true that he does exactly this, and for it to be true that he does *exactly this*, then reality must be exactly that way. Nothing that isn't reality being that way could be a truthmaker for that truth. Thus, the sort of explanatory priority at work in Premise 13 fulfills the conditions for being unique truthmaker priority.

The consequent of Premise 12, on the other hand, does not satisfy the conditions for unique truthmaker priority. A necessary condition for the truth of the right-hand side of the biconditional defining unique truthmaker priority is that the thing substituted in for the "Y" variable, the second relatum of the explanatory priority relation in question, be a belief or knowledge state whose content is made true by the first relatum of the relation. The second relatum of the explanatory priority relation in the consequent of Premise 12, however, is Christ's performing some action, such as driving moneychangers from the temple. And driving moneychangers from a temple is not something that is a belief or knowledge state. Thus, a necessary condition for the truth of the right-hand side of the biconditional defining unique truthmaker priority is unsatisfied; the right side is false. So, the left side is false as well. Christ's foreknowing that he will perform action B is not prior to his B-ing in the unique truthmaker sense.

What if we consider cases where Christ's foreknowledge is of future belief states? In that case the Y relatum would be a belief or knowledge state. Even so, the necessary condition for the right side of the biconditional would not be fulfilled, because the first relatum must be the truthmaker for the propositional content of the second relatum to be a case of unique truthmaker priority. But we can see through an example that foreknowledge of future belief or knowledge states would not be a necessary component of any truthmaker for the propositional content of the second relatum.

If we make it explicit that the explanatory relation in the consequent of 12 is unique truthmaker priority, it reads:

> It is possible that Christ's foreknowing that he performs action B is explanatorily prior, in the unique truthmaker sense, to his B-ing.

Now let the action that he foreknows that he will perform in the first relatum be that of coming to know *that P*, and let the B-ing of the second relatum be his coming to know P. His coming to know P, unlike his belief that P, is not the sort of thing that has propositional content. Coming to know something is not the same as knowing it. And so, the second relatum is not the right sort of thing to be substituted in for Y in unique truthmaker priority.

But even allow that the second relatum is the right sort of thing to be substituted in for Y in unique truthmaker priority, the necessary condition is still not satisfied. For if an action of coming to know something is to have propositional content, it will either be the content of the thing known—that is,

P, in this case—or it will be the activity itself—that is, *that Christ comes to know P*. The truthmaker for neither *P* nor *that Christ comes to know P* is the earlier foreknowledge that Christ had. We can see this by example.

Let Christ foreknow at some time, *t1*, that he will, at some later time, *t2*, know that Timothy exists. Is Christ's foreknowledge that he will later know that Timothy exists prior to his later knowledge that Timothy exists in the unique truthmaker sense? It is only if the propositional content of the second relatum, his later knowledge that Timothy exists, must have, at least as a part, the first relatum as its truthmaker. And remember that the propositional content of that act is either *that Timothy exists* or *that Christ comes to know that Timothy exists*. But neither of these is made true by Christ's prior foreknowledge that he will come to know that Timothy exists.

Christ's foreknowledge that Timothy will exist is not a truthmaker for the propositional content *that Timothy exists*. Timothy is the truthmaker for such content. And Christ's foreknowledge that he will come to know that Timothy exists is not a truthmaker for *that Christ comes to know that Timothy exists*. The actual coming to know is the truthmaker for that proposition. And so, even in cases where the foreknowledge is foreknowledge of future knowledge states, such foreknowledge is not prior to the future knowledge states in the unique truthmaker sense.

Thus, the relata in the consequent of Premise 12 *do not* fulfill the conditions for standing in a relation of unique truthmaking priority, but they *do* fulfill the conditions for standing in a relation of motivational priority. And the relata in Premise 13 *do* fulfill the conditions for standing in a relation of unique truthmaking priority, but they *do not* fulfill the conditions for standing in a relation of motivational priority. And so, there are different senses of priority being employed in Premises 12 and 13. Or, perhaps better to claim, we have, as of yet, no reason to believe that there is a single notion of priority that applies to both Premises 12 and 13.

Premise 14 states that it is impossible for Christ's acting to be explanatorily prior to his foreknowing and also for his foreknowing to be explanatorily prior to his acting. If there are two notions of priority in play in the reasoning, then this statement is not obviously true. Rather, an argument would be required to show that the two sorts of priority in question cannot form a circle. We might represent motivational and unique truthmaker priority as $EP_M(x,y)$, and $EP_T(x,y)$, respectively. Then, with this representative schema, the first three premises, on this understanding of the argument in question, would need to be as follows:

$12_M.$ $(FT\&F) \rightarrow \Diamond EP_M(f,b)$

$13_T.$ $\Box EP_T(b,f)$

$14_{M,T}.$ $\sim\!\Diamond(EP_M(f,b) \;\&\; EP_T(b,f))$

Why think that Premise $14_{M,T}$ is true, though? Until an argument is given for it, the proponent of Christ's human foreknowledge and freedom need not accept $14_{M,T}$, though she can happily accept 14.

But perhaps we are not out of the woods just yet. Perhaps there is another notion of priority that is used univocally across premises 12–14. In such a case, the charge of equivocation would not stick. The argument from explanatory circularity would still have a rendering that is sound.

For instance, one might focus on the source of Christ's foreknowledge.[28] Suppose one has a causal theory of knowledge.[29] On the causal theory of knowledge, "*S knows that p if and only if the fact p is causally connected in an 'appropriate' way with S's believing p.*"[30] We might take the fact that p to be Christ's B-ing, and S's believing p to be Christ's foreknowing that he will B. In such a case, there is a causal relation that holds between what I've called "*b*" and "*f*." And that relation gives us at least a partial explanation of why Christ foreknows; he foreknows because he fulfills the proper analysis of knowledge (assuming, as we are, the causal theory of knowledge here). And that analysis isn't contingent; it is of the nature of what knowledge is that it requires an appropriate causal connection between the fact and the belief, or, in this case, the act and the foreknowledge. We might represent the conclusion of this reasoning as follows:

13_C. $\Box EP_C(b,f)$

Christ's B-ing is explanatorily prior, in a causal sense, to his foreknowing that he will B.

One might worry that a causal theory of knowledge, conjoined with the Foreknowledge Thesis, requires backwards causation, since Christ's B-ing occurs after the foreknowing, yet the B-ing is causally related to the knowing. Goldman, the originator of the causal theory of knowledge considers a similar worry. His response is that, while there can be knowledge of future things, all that is required is that some causally appropriate relation hold between the fact and the belief (or, again, in this case, the action and the foreknowledge). One such appropriate relation is that of having a common cause, he says.[31] While this relation might work for the cases of mundane knowledge of the future that Goldman considers, the common cause relation cannot be the relation the proponent of the Argument from Explanatory Priority employs.

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[28] I thank Robin Le Poidevin for bringing the need to address this response to my attention.

[29] For the canonical article on the causal theory of knowledge, see Alvin Goldman (1967). For an early rebuttal to it, see Kenneth W. Collier (1973).

[30] Goldman (1967, 369). The italics are in the original. There has been much wrangling on what, exactly, an appropriate way to be connected is. This book is not the place to get into such wrangling.

[31] See Goldman (1967, 364–5).

If the EP relation employed in Premises 12–14 is a common cause relation between Christ's B-ing and his foreknowing that he will B, then Premise 14 is false. If EP_C is understood as a common cause relation, then it seems entirely reasonable to think that, necessarily, $EP_C(f,b)$ is true if and only if $EP_C(b,f)$ is true; that is, necessarily, if f shares a common cause with b, then b shares a common cause with f (and vice versa). So, understanding the causal relation in the way Goldman understands appropriate causal relations with future actions or facts will not safeguard the soundness of the argument. Some other EP relation is needed to secure univocity across the premises, and it is incumbent upon the proponent of the argument from explanatory priority to provide it.

Furthermore, for the argument to be sound a modified Premise 12 would have to be true:

12_C. $(FT\&F) \rightarrow \Diamond EP_C(f,b)$

The truth of the consequent will require the possibility that foreknowledge be a *cause* of later action. And that causal relation will have to be whatever sort of causal relation one uses for explaining how future actions cause earlier mental states. One wonders here, though, what reason we have to think that *that* causal relation holds between a person's motivations and his actions. It is odd enough to think of motivating as, literally, a causal relation of the same type as the causal theory of knowledge employs in its analysis of knowledge. It is even more peculiar to note that it isn't the standard causal relation, but some backwards facing non-common-cause causal relation. At the very least, the proponent of 12_C owes an account of why one should affirm it.

If there were a single EP relation that holds both ways between Christ's B-ing and his foreknowing that he will B, then that would be a problem for the proponent of the antecedent of 12. I conclude that if the appropriate causal connection posited by the causal theory of knowledge is one such relation that holds both ways, then the argument that it is is still wanting. As such, I believe that this response, the response from distinguishing senses of explanatory priority, is a viable way of responding to the Problem of Explanatory Priority.

IX. CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have questioned the coherence of affirming the conjunction of Conciliar Christology, the claim that Christ had exhaustive, infallible, certain foreknowledge of his own future actions, and the claim that he was still free in the same sense we mere humans are. I have presented two arguments which purport to show that the following Conditional is true:

The Conditional:	If the Foreknowledge Thesis is true, then Christ's created human will was not free, or at least lacked one sort of freedom vital for human flourishing.

I found both arguments to be wanting. I conclude that if the Foreknowledge Thesis, or the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the Foreknowledge Thesis, is inconsistent with the freedom of Christ's human will, it has yet to be shown.[32]

Conclusion

The goal of this book has been to show that the extant philosophical arguments against what I've called Extended Conciliar Christology are unsound. Recall the six conjuncts of Extended Conciliar Christology:

Conciliar Christology: The conjunction of the teachings about the incarnation from the (first) seven ecumenical councils.

Thomistic Multiple Incarnations: There could be three simultaneously existing concrete rational natures, each of which is assumed by all three of the divine persons, at the same time.

Interim Union: In the interim state between the death and resurrection of Christ, the Word remained united to both the body and the soul, though the body and soul were not united to one another, the body remaining in the sepulcher and the soul descending into the underworld.

The Human Freedom Thesis: Christ, by virtue of his assumed human will, was free.

The Impeccability Thesis: Christ was unable to sin.

The Foreknowledge Thesis: Christ, in virtue of his created human intellect, had certain, infallible, exhaustive foreknowledge.

To do so, I have considered no fewer than fifteen arguments against some conjunction or other of Conciliar Christology and some extension or extensions. As I noted previously in the book (Introduction, Section II.d.), as I went through these extensions, which are listed in the order I discussed them, I continued assuming the previous extensions, though I did not always explicitly state I was doing so at every turn. The only times I explicitly brought a previous extension into the argumentation were in Chapter 8, where I assumed

both the Human Freedom Thesis and the Foreknowledge Thesis for the sake of argument, and in Chapter 6, Section III.b., where I briefly discussed the relation between the Human Freedom Thesis and the Impeccability Thesis.

The method I employed, I know full well, does not show that the fully extended conjunction is free of inconsistencies. For, as stated in the Introduction, adding together some extensions might engender more avenues for objectors to argue for inconsistency. So, it would be fruitful, in this conclusion, to ask explicitly whether the six theses mentioned above are inconsistent. I see no reason to think that they are.

The main danger of inconsistency, at this point, doesn't come from conjoining Conciliar Christology to any particular extension. For I've already discussed all the philosophical arguments I am aware of against such extensions. Rather, to my mind, the main danger comes from some unseen difficulty in conjoining some extensions together. Let's take a moment, then, and consider some conjunctions of the extensions to see if we can fish out some tension between them.

For my own part, I do not see how Thomistic Multiple Incarnations would be inconsistent with the interim union of Christ's natures, or his human freedom, or his inability to sin, or, finally, his human knowledge of all creation. Does the mere possibility of the Son's becoming incarnate twice, or another divine person's becoming incarnate, or the Son's sharing a nature with another divine person, render the Son's actual union with the human nature impermanent, or render him actually able to sin, or unfree, or ignorant of the past, present, and future? I confess that I do not see how such an argument would go.

Perhaps one could argue that he couldn't be free in his human nature if both the Father and the Son shared that human nature. Perhaps the Son wouldn't be the right sort of source for the human nature's activities if the Father were a source of those activities in the same sense. Notice, though, that such an objection is irrelevant to the content of Fully Extended Conciliar Christology. For Fully Extended Conciliar Christology doesn't say anything about whether or not the Son *would* be free, *were* he sharing his human nature with another divine person. Rather, it says that the Son is, in actual fact, free with respect to his human nature. And that the Son could, in other situations, share his human nature with another divine person. It says nothing about whether the Son would be free in such a circumstance.

Might Interim Union imply the impossibility of multiple incarnations, lack of human freedom, the ability to sin, or human ignorance? I don't see how Interim Union would render the human nature unfree, able to sin, or ignorant (or, put otherwise, render Christ, the person, humanly unfree, humanly able to sin, or humanly ignorant). Perhaps there is an argument to this conclusion somewhere in the literature. If there is, I confess that I didn't find it in my reading or hear of it in my discussions with other people who work on Christology.

Similarly, if Christ is humanly free, I do not see that as problematic with respect to the possibility of Thomistic Multiple Incarnations, or the actuality of Interim Union. It is true that there are some tensions one can point to between the Impeccability Thesis and the Human Freedom Thesis. I have already discussed and dismissed such tensions, though, in Chapter 6, Section III.b. And it is true that there are some arguments for the conclusion that if Christ is free according to his human nature, then he lacks exhaustive foreknowledge. The arguments discussed in Chapter 8 are arguments for this claim, insofar as they are arguments for its contrapositive (i.e., arguments for the claim that if he has exhaustive foreknowledge, then he isn't free, or isn't free in an important sense). I know of no other arguments for these claims, and so I don't see any lurking problems for the other four extensions based on the assumption that Christ is humanly free.

What of the claim that he is unable to sin? Such a claim, so far as I can tell, doesn't render Thomistic Multiple Incarnations false. Perhaps if every human must be able to sin, then Thomistic Multiple Incarnations would be in trouble. But then again, so would the conjunction of Conciliar Christology and the Impeccability Thesis, since they, together, imply that there was at least one human who was not able to sin. I discuss whether merely being human implies the ability to sin briefly in Chapter 6, Section III.b. Again, there are worries about whether the inability to sin implies his lacking human freedom. Those, too, are discussed in Chapter 6, Section III.b. Concerning the Foreknowledge Thesis, I don't see how the inability to sin would preclude foreknowledge. In fact, the contrary seems the more likely objection: that having foreknowledge implies the inability to sin. For one could argue, as we've seen in Chapter 8, that exhaustive foreknowledge implies the inability to act freely. But if an act isn't free, then it is not one that is sinful (that is, all sinful acts are free). And so, given exhaustive foreknowledge, Christ is unable to sin. I don't agree with such argumentation, since I don't believe that exhaustive foreknowledge implies the inability to act freely, as I argue in Chapter 8. So, I don't see the Impeccability Thesis as causing havoc when conjoined to the rest of Fully Extended Conciliar Christology.

Finally, what of the Foreknowledge Thesis? Does Christ's knowing, by means of his human intellect, all things past, present, and future, imply the impossibility of multiple incarnations, the falsity of Interim Union, his lack of human freedom, or his ability to sin? Again, I do not see how the Foreknowledge Thesis implies the falsity of any of those extensions. The only place where I see even the beginning of a potential problem concerns the Human Freedom Thesis; I consider arguments against the conjunction of the Human Freedom Thesis and the Foreknowledge Thesis in Chapter 8.

From my perspective, then, I don't see any remaining openings for the objector to claim that Fully Extended Conciliar Christology is shown inconsistent by philosophical argumentation. Again, perhaps there are arguments

for such a conclusion out there that neither I nor my peers discovered. And if there are, of course the blame for their omission in this book falls squarely on my shoulders and no one else's. For it is my job to do due diligence in searching for those arguments, not my colleagues' jobs.

In light of the foregoing reasoning in this book, then, I conclude that Fully Extended Conciliar Christology is not shown to be inconsistent or incoherent by means of an extant philosophical argument. As I've stated more than once, I haven't attempted to show that Fully Extended Conciliar Christology is true, or that it is justified for us to believe it. I haven't attempted to show that it is biblically responsible, historically warranted, or theologically innocent. Such arguments are beyond my abilities. But I have attempted to show—and, I hope, actually shown—that if one is to reject Fully Extended Conciliar Christology, it should not be on the grounds of the extant philosophical arguments against it. The historian, biblical scholar, or theologian ought not to dismiss the theological tradition of the church with a gesture or nod toward an apparent philosophical difficulty. For, given the argumentation of this book, that which is gestured or nodded toward is not sufficient for jettisoning the Fully Extended Conciliar Christology that we find in earlier Christological discussions. If such a Christology is to be rejected on the basis of a sound philosophical argument, that argument is still waiting patiently to be made.

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Index